REGIS COLLEGE LIBRARY
3 1761 05029073 3

Children of the Kingdom

MARY ADELAIDE GARNETT

COLL. CHRISTI. REGIS
BIB. MAJ.
TORONTO

JESUIT
BIBL. MAJ.
SEMINARY

CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM

JESUIT
BIBL. MAJ.
SEMINARY,

JESUIT
BIBL. MAJ.
SEMINARY

"The little ones of His Kingdom."

Children of the Kingdom

By

Mary Adelaide Garnett

(Beatrice Fernekees)

COLL. CHRISTI. REGIS
BIB. MAJ.
TORONTO

JESUIT
BIBL. MAJ.
SEMINARY

NEW YORK
THE DEVIN-ADAIR COMPANY
1920

22515

Nihil obstat.

REMIGIUS LAFORT, S.T.D.
Censor.

Imprimatur.

✠ JOHN CARDINAL FARLEY,
Archbishop of New York.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 17th, 1914

Copyright, 1914, by
THE DEVIN-ADAIR CO.

All Rights Reserved by The Devin-Adair Co.

Dedicated to

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

and

QUEEN OF ALL SAINTS

Foreword

IN these days of early First Communions, it is well to place before the child mental pictures of those whom the Church honors as childhood's saints. The main outlines in the lives of these Children of the Kingdom are true. The setting alone is fanciful, throwing the picture into bolder relief. It has been attempted to write the stories just as they have been told to hundreds of eager boy and girl listeners.

As types of holiness the little saints are not at all beyond the imitation of the average child of to-day. Sometimes I have put on the lips of a martyr the very words of children I have known and loved. The boys and girls of the present generation are as deeply loyal, as truly loving, as were the saints of long ago. There is a veneer of worldliness, it cannot be denied,

over the hearts of very many of God's little ones, caused in great part by ignorance of the lovableness of Christ and His friends, or cloaking a very real piety that they are ashamed to show. There are enemies to be met now as mighty as the foes of old, and all the more dangerous because they are hidden. To meet them well, and to be victors in the conflict, the child soldier of Christ to-day needs the high courage and stainless nobility of God's martyrs.

When, if not in childhood, can the ideals of Christ's kingdom be infused? To unspoiled souls there are no mysteries. Faith is made vision to the pure in heart. They peer into the dim stable of Bethlehem, and with eager love long to shield the Baby-God from the cold winds of the hill. They watch the Boy-Christ as He treads the narrow streets of Nazareth, and listen to the miracles of the Master with misty eyes, in imagination kneeling at His feet, with the crowds of old holding fast His robe. In childhood the seeds of solid

virtue are sown in fertile ground, and later may bring forth fruit a hundredfold. When they learn that boys and girls of real flesh and blood, with the real joys and sorrows of children, lived lives of heroism for Christ, and were willing to face death for His sake, there comes into their own souls an almost unconscious increase of loyalty, honor, fearless love and simple faith. They learn to scorn what is low and base, sincerity reigns in their hearts, and they in turn, in another age, and in another way, become "Children of the Kingdom."

BEATRICE FERNEKEES.

Contents

	PAGE
Mary, Queen of All Saints	13
Joseph, the Carpenter	18
Anthony, Altar Boy, Martyr of Japan	22
Agnes, Little Maid of Rome, Martyr	25
Benedict the Younger, Little Shepherd Saint of France	30
Barbara of the Tower	33
Cyril, Loved of the Angels	36
Cecilia, Girl Saint of Song	40
Dioscorus, Boy Soldier of Christ	46
Dorothy, God-given	49
Eugene, the Youngest	54
Eulalia, the Pure of Heart	58
Felix, Boy Saint of Happiness	62
Faith, the Brave	66
Guy, the Wonder Worker	70
Germaine, the Shepherdess	75
Hugh, Martyr of the Cross	79
Hope, the Little Sister	81
Ignatius, Child of God	84
Imelda, the First Communicant	88
Januarius, the Eldest	93

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Julia, the Slave	98
Kenelm, the Boy King	103
Katherine, the Philosopher	108
Louis, Little Martyr of Japan	113
Lucy, the Devoted Daughter	118
Maximian, the Sleeper	123
Martina, the Beautiful	127
Nomen, the Nameless One	132
Nunilo, Maid of Spain	137
Omnes Martyres	140
Pancratius, Boy Martyr	145
Potomiana of the Lillies	150
Quiricus, the Baby Martyr	154
Rogation, Red-Robed	159
Rose, of Viterbo	163
Simon, Infant Martyr	166
Soteris, the Patrician's Daughter	169
Tarcisius, Martyr of the Blessed Sacrament	172
Thecla, First Girl-Martyr	177
Ulpian, the Friend	180
Venantius, Knight of the Cross	184
Victoria, Brave-Heart	188
William of the Shops	191
Winefrede, of Holy Well	194
A Little Follower of Xavier	197
Yvo, the Student	200
Zita, the Serving Maid	203

Mary, Queen of All Saints

THE little one raised her eyes, and gazed through the great Nicanor gate to the gleaming Holy of Holies. The old High Priest in his stately garments, surrounded by white-robed virgins with softly shining candles, received her in love, and listened to the whispered prayer that fell from her childish lips.

How reverently God's angels must have hovered about their little Queen as she passed through the high-arched cloisters! Only three years had she been on earth, a lily purer than the fairest flower, golden-hearted, untouched by the slightest stain.

Saint Anne and Saint Joachim watched her, until the last gleam of her candle faded in the distance, and the sweet singing of the Temple virgins died softly away. Then slowly and sadly they turned homewards,

to that house that never again would be so full of happiness.

The years passed, and Mary grew fairer in soul and body in their passing. It is said that the timid doves loved to nestle in her arms, and hover cloud-like about her shoulders, whenever she left the cloister court. Often, she would sit with her back to the glittering city of Jerusalem, and her face toward the Holy of Holies, an open book of the Scriptures on her lap, pondering on the wonderful love of God for the people He had made. At her feet lay a basket of wool, and her distaff, for the moment, still. Her sweet face is full of peace, her eyes cast down, her lips trembling into the gentlest of smiles. The love of God cloaks her as a mantle, and His spirit broods over the soul He so dearly loves.

But the days of quiet must end at last, and the little maid, at the call of God, left the Temple.

"The peace of God cloaks her as a mantle."

One night, as she knelt in prayer, in her poor home at Nazareth, a silver light gleamed all about her, and Gabriel, "One of the seven who stand before the Lord," bowed low in deep humility before her. "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee," he cried, and when she did not understand, he explained God's wonderful message. Out of all the world, and from all time, the King of heaven had chosen her to be the dear Mother of His Son, when He should come to earth. Mary bent her head, and answered low, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word."

And then at Bethlehem, we see her in the tiny, bare cave, because there was no room for her at the inn on that first sweet Christmas night. In a little manger lined with straw lies the Baby King of all the world, and, kneeling beside Him, Mary, His Mother, looks at Him, in mingled joy and sadness. Dear Saint Joseph, in his

rough, brown robe and sandaled feet, stands by her side, his gentle face alight with wonder and love. Over the hills come the weather-beaten shepherds, followed by their flocks, and kneel in the starlight adoring their new-born King.

But though Mary is Jesus' Mother, we long to be able to call her our Mother.

Thirty-three years have passed, and it is a cold, bitter day on the Mount of Calvary. Nailed to a cross, Jesus, the same dear Lord Who rested in the manger at Bethlehem, and went about, through the lanes and by-ways of the cities, doing good, is dying for the sins of man. Darkness like a black cloud spreads over the sky, the sun hides its noontide glow. The last hour is nearing, and all the world is buried in gloom. At the foot of the cross stands Mary, the Mother of Jesus, close to Him now as she was in the little stable cave.

Better than all the earth He loves her, and looking out over the sea of people

surging at His feet like angry waves, His divine Heart is filled with yearning. He longs to save them, He knows their danger, and, turning to His Mother, He gives her to all who dwell in the world to be their Mother also.

O Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother, lead us by the hand through the valley of the shadow, and bring us safe at length to the Feet of Jesus our King.

Joseph, the Carpenter

MANY years after the great king David ruled over the people of Israel, there lived in the city of Nazareth a poor and lowly carpenter descended from that royal line. Rough were his hands and hardened by toil, but gently they uplifted the weary and sick, who dearly loved their good neighbor.

We first hear of him in a pretty legend that brought him into the Temple court. Mary, the little virgin, who was later to be the Mother of God, was about to leave her peaceful cloister-home at the wish of the Lord. Commanded by an angel, the High Priest called together all the young men of the House of David, that God might show by a sign which one He would choose to be the husband of Mary. Many young men came, brave and strong and true of heart, and all were told to place

their staves in a room of the Temple over one night.

They obeyed, and in the morning the well-worn staff of dear Saint Joseph was found covered with snow-white lilies, and the air was heavy with their fragrance. Pure as the mountain frost was the soul of the simple carpenter, and into his care God gave Mary.

Ah! what happy days those were, when after the return from Egypt they dwelt together at Nazareth, Jesus, Mary and Joseph. In the workshop, and in the home, the sound of Jesus' voice, and the light patter of His feet, were as the sweetest music. And when in the task of the hour, Jesus' hand softly touched Joseph's, a strange thrill stirred the old man's heart. Together at nightfall, they would go down the village street, and return the work done during the day. Sometimes into the carpenter's hand a little Hand could steal in loving comfort,

should a rough word or loud rebuke greet him.

And then those quiet moments at dusk, when standing before them, perhaps with outstretched arms, as though longing even then to shed His Blood for men, Jesus would tell them of all that was to come. And the twilight would deepen, and the birds hush their songs, and the blossoms close their dewy petals, all unheeded, as Mary and Joseph watched Him.

Sometimes in the workshop Saint Joseph would see Him put together two pieces of wood in the form of a cross, then stand back to gaze at it in eager love. And the old carpenter would wonder in silence.

At last the day came when Saint Joseph could no longer work. The time had come when he must give up that sweet life of peace, and die, that going into Limbo, he might tell the souls who were waiting there that soon, so soon, Jesus would deliver them. It was hard for

"And Joseph would watch Him, and wonder in silence."

him to know that he must leave Jesus even for a little while, but it was God's will, and in that he was content.

His poor cot was drawn close to the door, the sunlight shone warmly about him, and Jesus came from the inner room, and stood by his side. Joseph's eyes sought His eagerly. Not as the little Lad of the workshop was He coming now, but as God, and Judge. Yet His divine Face was alight with love and gentleness. At the foot of the bed knelt Mary. For the first time in long years, Saint Joseph's hands were still. Jesus took them in His own, and pillowed the tired head on His Heart. Weariness, pain and anxiety were gone now, and there was only a strong peace. With a smile on his lips Saint Joseph died. And we, as we watch him in mental picture, pray that we may die as he did, with Jesus by our side, and Mary very near.

Feast, March nineteenth.

Anthony, Altar Boy—Martyr of Japan

IT was early morning in far-away Japan. In an open bamboo chapel a priest was saying Mass, and little Anthony was serving him. Without, in the swaying tree branches, a bird was singing his matins, and the breeze, like an angel's thurible, wafted the incense of flowers before the throne of the King of kings.

Everything spoke of peace, yet a war of the sternest kind was preparing,—a war against all who loved Christ Jesus. The quiet of the chapel was like the lull before the storm, and in the stillness a brave boy soldier was girding himself for the battle.

Thirteen short years had Anthony lived, and each year had taught him to love God more. And now, though the battle for Christ's sake be hard, though he might

have to suffer torture, the eager, boyish soul never faltered in the loving gift of his life to God, when God willed, and as He willed it.

"My God, You died for me," his lips trembled, as he rang the altar bell at the moment of Consecration. "Let me die for love of You."

His prayer was heard. A few days later, because of his loyalty to the King of kings, he was condemned to be crucified.

In silence the boy watched as the soldiers prepared the rough crosses on which he and the priest, whose Mass he had so often served, were to die. Then he stooped swiftly, pressed a light kiss on the splintered wood, and with a smile outstretched his hands for the nails. The hammer fell with quick strokes, and the cross was raised.

Side by side in the little chapel, the priest and the boy had prepared for the battle, and now side by side, triumphant

in victory, their souls were rising out of the smoke of conflict, and peace was very near.

A brief time of pain, and the dear King Whom they loved called them home. The gates of His Kingdom were flung wide in welcome, and down through a vista of angel forms He came to whisper an eternal "Well done."

Martyrs of Japan, February ninth.

Agnes, Little Maid of Rome—Martyr

THE walls of the little catacomb crypt were dark and bare, still marked with the uneven strokes of the pick-axe. The floor was streaked with damp, and the tiny rose flame of the hanging lamp scarcely lighted the rough-hewn altar.

One by one the Christians had left the Mass chamber, and now Agnes was alone, —alone with the dear, hidden Lord. Little bride of Christ, white-robed, flower-crowned, her heart was too full for words of prayer. But a few moments past she had spoken her vow of virginity, and now she could not bear to leave Him to Whom her love was given.

The call of the semantrons summoned her to go from the Master in His sacramental presence to find Him in work for His poor. Obedient to its sounding, she

rose from her knees. Bright tears dimmed for an instant her soft dark eyes, but she brushed them away. "Dear God, I am not worthy," she whispered.

In and out, through the winding streets of the city where the poor were huddled together, the deaconesses and little virgins who had consecrated their lives to Christ, made their way, scattering sunshine and love, and winning souls to God.

Of noble birth, and known throughout all Rome, Agnes could not do her work unseen. Won by a charm they could not understand, many pagans of high rank begged for her hand in marriage, but to each one, as they came, she gave the same answer, "To God alone my love is given."

In those stern days of long ago, love of Jesus meant death for Him. The doom of the little maid was sealed. Soldiers came to her father's home with manacles to bind her hands and lead her before the court. One after another the chains

were slipped over her wrists, but they were too large, and fell to the ground.

Agnes smiled. "I do not need your prison bracelets to lead me to Jesus," she said playfully. "I will go with you gladly for His sake."

Clad in her virgin's cloak, fairer in her simplicity than the richly robed pagan maids about her, she stood fearlessly in the half gloom before the tribunal. They led her before the altar of Minerva and commanded her to bow in adoration. On a carven stand were the coals for the incense, and the golden thurible. Dark-faced and servile, Minerva's priests bent forward to help her, but the child shrank from their touch. How different was this glitter and show from the quiet and peace of the dim catacombs!

She raised her hand in the sign of the cross, and her voice rang out in clear tones, "God alone will I adore, and to Him alone will I bow."

The face of the judge darkened, and turning to his guards he spoke a low word of command. In obedience they brought into the temple, the gleaming sword, sharp pincers, and the molten lead. Agnes looked at them calmly, no fear in her face, no fear in her heart.

"This is the torture that awaits you, unless you do my will," a stern voice said.

Agnes lifted her head. "You have had my answer," she repeated softly.

Then the Vestal virgins in their purple cloaks drew her to their midst and begged her to give worship to Vesta, the goddess of the home. Vividly they pictured the delights of her service, and the long night vigils before the sacred flame.

Agnes shrank away as a lily wind-blown. She was a little virgin of Christ and craved no earthly honor. The Vestals were chosen from among the fairest maidens of Rome, and vowed their lives in pure service to Vesta, but they were as far below Agnes

as the valley lies below the snow-capped mountain.

The judge bribed and flattered, then abused and threatened, but all in vain, and at last gave the order that she should be beheaded.

Without a word, Agnes knelt and bowed her head. The Vestals turned away, sad at heart, and the face of the judge grew strangely set.

The sword fell, and one of earth's sweetest flowers was transplanted, to bloom with a yet rarer beauty in the eternal gardens of God.

Feast, January twenty-first.

Benedict the Younger
Little Shepherd Saint of France

HE was a simple shepherd boy on the sunny hills of France. His flock of sheep he knew, each one by name, and they in turn knew and loved their little master. Sometimes he would lie down to sleep at night, his curly head pillowed on the soft fleece of a baby lamb. More often still he would lean on his shepherd's staff and look upwards towards the distant flame points in the sky, and think of God Who held the great universe in the hollow of His hand. What wonder that he grew to love God more and more as the days flew by. What wonder that God, seeing the strength and purity of the childish soul, chose him to be His instrument in the work He would have done.

It was at sunrise one day, and the green

fields lay wet and sweet, bathed in the rose-light of morning. A Voice from far away, yet seeming strangely near, rang on the still air, "Benedict, My child, My little one, listen to Me."

The boy fell on his knees, firmly grasping his shepherd's staff. "Speak, Lord," he cried softly, "for Your servant hears You." The brown head was bowed low, and the boyish lips were parted in awe, but the brave heart was ready.

Near the field where the sheep were browsing, ran a narrow, but dangerous river. Day after day many lives were lost in its tumbling waters, and no one was daring enough to bridge it over. This was to be Benedict's work, God-given, and God-aided.

He had no money, and his strength was slight, but led by his angel he did so many miracles that the people were aroused at last and helped royally.

The bridge was built, the governor him-

self lending his aid. On the middle arch a little chapel was made, and there beneath the red sanctuary lamp the lad spent many a happy moment. Barefooted, dewy-eyed, sometimes with a wee lamb in his arms, the little shepherd would kneel before the tabernacle. For a time he would forget the rest of his flock, and the cool fields and the silver stars. Here was God,—and God loved him,—and he loved God.

Not many years later the eternal Shepherd called His little follower home, and Benedict felt at last the warm embrace of Him Whose Voice he had heard on the sunlit hills.

He was buried under the altar of the chapel on the bridge, that all who passed might pause and think a moment of the boy who had done so great a work through his trust in God.

Feast, April fourteenth.

Barbara of the Tower.

BARBARA'S home was in a lonely turret, where her pagan father had placed her lest in some way she learn of God. Alone there day after day, she watched the trees bud into exquisite beauty in the fields below, and the stars shining in the dark skies, wondering who had made the world so fair.

She looked about her tower room. Idols of clay adorned every nook and corner, and little votive lamps were burning before them. She passed slowly from one to another, touching each one carefully. There must be a greater God than these poor lifeless images.

Throwing a scarf about her shoulders, she went out on her narrow balcony. The night air, heavy with fragrance, blew about her, and her eyes filled with tears.

"Mighty God of all, I do not know You,

but I love You," was the prayer that welled up from her full heart. "Oh, teach me Who You are."

Days passed, and God answered her appeal in His own way. A good old priest, who had heard of the little maid, went to her, and told her of the God Whom she had loved without knowing, and then at her desire baptised her in His name.

And now Barbara longed for some token of Christ, some symbol of His love. With all her strength she despised the idols that surrounded her, wishing she had power to destroy them. Near her balcony a column of pure white marble pointed heavenwards. With a gentle touch she marked a cross on its surface, and the marble yielded as though it were wax. Then she knelt in prayer, her lips close to that sign of her Master's suffering.

When her father heard that she had become a Christian, his anger went beyond all bounds. He himself dragged her be-

fore the tribunal and added his threats to those of the judge, unless she would at once bow before the idols she had scorned.

Barbara remained firm, and the order was passed that she must die. She was cruelly tortured, but brave and serene to the end, knelt at last for the death stroke. Her father stood behind her, sword upraised, his daughter's executioner. A moment he stayed his hand, as a Voice, far and sweet, was borne on the quiet air, calling the girl-martyr home.

Barbara lifted her head, her eyes full of happy tears. "Jesus, Master, I come," she cried, and outstretched her arms. The sword fell, and swifter than an arrow's flight her unsullied soul sped upwards to Him Whom she had loved in the shadow, Whom now she would see face to face.

Feast, December fourth.

Cyril, Loved of the Angels

THE gray shadows fell softly over the hill, and deepened in the quiet valley. The birds were hushing their wee ones to sleep with the tenderest of mother-songs, and in the blue-black sky the stars were coming out one by one.

Cyril threw back his head and smiled, though his eyes were wet with tears. "Dear Father God," he said aloud, "did You light those lamps to show me the way home to You?" He paused to crush back the lump in his throat. "You are my only Father now," he whispered softly; "for the father You gave me on earth says he will not call me his child any longer because I love You. And heaven is my only home, for I can never go back to my other home unless I stop loving You. And I will never do that, dear God."

He folded his white tunic closely about

"He hath given His angel charge."

him and went forward bravely. Night crept on, and only the occasional howl of a wolf and his own light footsteps broke the silence. But the boy was unafraid. Love drove out fear, and he could almost see his guardian angel by his side. The silver moonbeams seemed like the reflection of his outstretched wings, and the soft sounds in the woods like the rustle of his robes.

At last, through very weariness, the lad fell asleep, curled in the roots of a gnarled old tree, an orphan of earth, but doubly the child of an infinitely tender Father in heaven.

As the morning sun rose over the eastern hills, and shot its quiver of golden arrows into the shadowed woods, Cyril awoke, stiff and cramped, but light of heart. What if martyrdom awaited him in the near city, it would only mean a quicker going home.

The streets were arousing to life. Heavy chariots were rolling by on the way to the homes of the rich. Droves of cattle were being driven to the market place, followed

by an ever-increasing cloud of dust. Men were crying out their orders, and the night guards were wearily awaiting those who were to relieve them.

Full of boyish curiosity Cyril's eyes roved about eagerly. All was so new and strange. Once he had been to the city with his father, but that was long ago. At the thought, the young lips set the more firmly. Oh, if his father only knew God, surely then he would love Him, and side by side they might enter into His presence. Where should he go? In all the wide streets he saw no familiar face, no open door to give him welcome. Overhead the sky was cloudless, and the warm sunshine cheered the heart that had just begun to grow sad. A smile crept about his lips, and with one hand he smoothed his rumpled tunic.

His noble bearing and fearless poise attracted the attention of the day guard who had just come to his post. "Where is your home, boy?" he asked.

Cyril pointed upwards. "Heaven is my home," he answered simply, "and God is my Father."

"Then you are a Christian," the man broke in. "Come with me." He brought him to the judge, who, full of pity for Cyril's tender years, offered him gold and honors if he would go back to his earthly father, and give up his heavenly home. But the boy was resolute, and neither punishment nor the threat of it could make him waver. Sentence was then passed and the death-fire kindled.

With a prayer on his lips the child knelt down, folding his hands on his breast. The golden light of mid-day lay all about him, but deep in his eyes was a gladder, sweeter light than earth had ever seen. "I am coming, Father, coming home to You," he whispered, and the fair white angel by his side bore his soul to the Father.

Feast, May twenty-ninth.

Cecilia, Girl Saint of Song

CLAD in a tunic of soft wool, her hair falling unbound as a veil of virginity about her, Cecilia knelt in prayer. It was her wedding morning, and trembling a little she awaited the call that must soon come. Many months ago she had pledged her heart's love to God alone, but naturally timid she had not dared to tell of it when her parents had said that they had promised her hand to Valerian. Her face was as white as the bridal robe in which she had unwillingly been arrayed. "Dear God, teach me what to say," she pleaded.

How the hours passed before sunset she never knew, but at last she stood before her lover, daring not even to raise her eyes to his. All her heart went out in a prayer for strength, as for the first time

she whispered his name. "Wilt thou come apart a little with me," she said, "until I tell thee a wondrous secret?"

He followed where she led, to a place apart from the pagan revel. All at once her fear fell away, and she told him simply of her vow to serve ever, in a near and sacred way, the great God of all." With a calmness that she felt came not from herself, she bade him respect her promise, as there stood by her side an angel ever ready to defend her.

Valerian was silent a moment in doubt. Then he said slowly, "If I see the angel, I will believe."

Cecilia smiled radiantly. "Go out on the Appian Way," she said, "and at the third milestone thou shalt see a group of beggars. To a place underground and dark shall they lead thee, but on thy return thou shalt see my angel."

Full of wonder Valerian obeyed. Down through the winding ways of the cata-

comb of Callistus the beggars led him on, until he stood before the Bishop Urban. A little abashed at the calm majesty of the old man, he told him of his errand. Then the Bishop taught him of God and of the faith of a Christian soul, and the heart of Valerian was touched. Humbly he begged for Baptism, and after a time of thought the Bishop granted his plea.

Full of joy the young nobleman, pagan no longer, returned to Cecilia. He entered the room softly, but she was unaware of his coming. Angel forms had gathered about her, and she knelt with uplifted face in their midst. Faint music as though from hidden choirs swept the little room. Reverently he knelt at a distance from her, and when her prayer was done, told her of his conversion.

A brief time later, because he had dared to bury with honor the bodies of some Christian martyrs, he was condemned to

death. With him died his brother Tiburtius, whom he had brought to God.

Cecilia laid their bodies to rest in the cemetery of Saint Callistus and daily longed for the hour when she too might confess Christ. Her time came in the month of November, when in the absence of the Emperor, Alexander Severus, Amalchius, Prefect of Rome, opened a little persecution of the Christians.

Before his tribunal she told of her love for God, and was condemned to be suffocated in her own home.

In the palaces of the wealthy Romans there were luxurious baths arranged in an upper hall. An outer room, called the Frigidarium, was for cold baths. Adjoining it was the Tepidarium, where the waters were touched with warmth, and a small high-walled cell, arranged for vapor baths, was called the Caldarium. Under this room there was a furnace which heated

the water in the circular coils above, until great clouds of steam poured into the narrow space. It was in a room of this kind that Cecilia was placed, and the little cell is still to be seen in her home on the Via Salutaris.

For long hours the jailers left her here, while they fed the flames in the great furnace. But when they opened the door they found the room swept by cool breezes, and Cecilia unhurt.

A soldier was then sent to cut off her head. He stopped a moment in the corridor, watching her as she stood against the gray wall. Her robes of rose and gold, her long shimmering hair, made her seem a flower of rare, strange beauty. His hand trembled, and he brushed the mist from his eyes as he crossed the threshold.

Silently, Cecilia knelt for the death-blow. Three strokes were allowed by the Roman law, and no more. They were given,—but blindly,—and seeing that she

still lived the man threw down his sword and fled.

For three days Cecilia lingered in pain, making affectionate signs to those who strove in vain to staunch the flow of blood. Then sweetly as a child sinking in a mother's arms, she fell asleep in the Lord.

Feast, November twenty-second.

Dioscorus, Boy Soldier of Christ

"YOU will not offer incense to Jupiter," the judge repeated angrily. "Do you not know that I have the power to force you to do it?"

The boy bowed his head. "You may force my hand to swing the censer," he said, and his voice rang out boldly, "but you can never force my heart to bow before an idol of stone."

The judge gave a signal, and six strong Greek soldiers stepped forward, standing in silence on either side of the slight, boyish form. Dioscorus moved not a muscle. He was the soldier of another army, and the honor of his King was at stake.

At a sign from the judge he was thrown on a rack, and his hands and feet fast bound to the pulleys. The wheels were

turned, and the bright face grew gray under the agony. Every bone was pulled from its socket, but the tense lips uttered no cry.

"Now will you offer incense?" the judge demanded. And the boy's voice, sharp with pain, rang out, "No,—never."

The torch was applied, and the heavily tipped lash tore the wounded body, but a true soldier of the thorn-crowned King, the lad bore it in silence.

The judge then changed his tactics and tried persuasion. He offered the boy rewards, a place near his own person, all to be won by a moment,—just one moment of adoration before Jupiter. "I have pity on your youth," the judge said. "For fifteen years have you served your God. Now bow to mine, and I will give you whatever you may ask." Dioscorus raised his right arm, crippled and weak though it was from the torture. "Yes," he said, "for fifteen years have I served my God,

and with His help I will serve Him throughout eternity."

It was a noble answer, and deep down in his stern heart the judge softened towards the boy who had faced death so fearlessly.

"Go," he said, and there was a strange tenderness in his voice, "and serve Alexandria as faithfully as you have served your God. I would not condemn so brave a soldier to death."

Weak and bleeding, yet victor, the boy was borne from the court room amidst the plaudits of the grim men about him.

The ordeal was over, and life still pulsed joyously in his veins, a new gift of God. There was a glory in the sunlit spaces, a breath of freedom in the very air, and deep in his heart a strength proof against a thousand foes,

Feast, December fourteenth.

Dorothy, God-Given

THE iron gate slammed, and Dorothy was alone. Down the white road strode the senator's son, his toga flying in the wind.

For the first time in her life the little maid was afraid. Her face was as white as the snowflakes now whirling about her. She drew her cloak closer with a little shiver, not wholly from the cold.

Her eyes followed the fast disappearing figure of the angry boy. She had refused to marry him because she had promised herself to Jesus Christ, and all her sweet, pure love was given to the Heart of God. Theophilus would tell the Emperor that she was a Christian, then would come terrible tortures and death. Oh, would she be brave enough to suffer then, when

now she was trembling at the mere thought of the flames and sword? Tears came to her eyes. She was only a weak girl, and the soldiers were so strong.

Then a thought quieted her. The name, Dorothy, meant "Gift of God." Her life was the dear Lord's gift. If she offered it back to Him bravely for His sake, would He not be with her even in the midst of the flames, to give her strength and courage?

Her lips smiled, her arms fell apart. "Dear God, I am not afraid now," she whispered, her face upturned to the gray skies.

A few months later a crowd without a prison waited for a sight of the girl martyr. Because she would not bow before the idols, Dorothy had that very day been condemned to death. As they watched, the gates swung wide, and Dorothy, her wrists bound, and guards on

either side, came forth. Her step was firm, her sweet lips smiling, but her eyes modestly cast down.

Theophilus was among the watching throng. As she passed him, he cried mockingly, "You are going to die for God, you say. I will believe that there is a God if you send me roses and apples from His garden."

Dorothy raised her eyes for a fleeting instant, then dropped them again. "I will send them," she answered simply.

That night, while Theophilus was trying to drown the memory of Dorothy's death in a gay banquet, a little child stood suddenly by his side. On one arm was a basket of crimson roses, and nestled deep down in the dark green leaves were apples, too fair to have been grown in the gardens of earth. "Dorothy bade me give these to you," a sweet voice whispered.

Theophilus turned, startled, but the boy had disappeared. Only the basket

with its fragrant burden of fruit and flowers remained.

"Here, catch that boy," he cried to the servants. "What boy?" they asked. "We have seen no one."

Theophilus waited not to answer, but sped out into the night. White-faced, he sought the city streets. Glaring lamps flashed at intervals along the dark ways, and by their light he peered wildly into hidden places. But no sign of the little one. Terror lent wings to his feet. Men turned to look after him, but he cared not. Dorothy's face, pure and sweet, gleamed before him, and urged him on. If the wee messenger were an angel of God, and the roses had come from His eternal home, then the faith for which the martyr had died was true.

All the long night he searched in vain, and the still hours of dawn found him prostrate in the open fields outside of the city gates. He pressed his hot face to the

"Who will not suffer His own to be lost, but calls every straying lamb by name."

cool, green grass, and the first prayer of his life sprang to his lips.

"O God of Dorothy, have mercy on me," he sobbed. "I believe, I believe."

One by one he remembered the words she had spoken to him, their sweetness and earnestness, and above all, her generous forgiveness, when she knew he had sought her life. Ah, the God whom she loved so dearly must be the true God.

A few brief months, and his new-born faith was strangely tested. As Dorothy had done, he stood before the great tribunal, thrilled by the thought that she had listened to her sentence, perhaps, on that very spot. Bravely he confessed Christ, and won the martyr's crown. The prayers of the girl martyr had been answered in heaven.

Feast, February sixth.

Eugene, The Youngest

THE room was full of warmth and light, and before the cheery fire on the hearth, Symphorosa and her boys were gathered. Eugene, the youngest, was resting his head on his mother's knee; Julianus stood behind her, one hand on her shoulder; Crescentius was writing at a table drawn up near, and the others were listening eagerly to something the mother was saying. An instant later Crescentius dropped his quill and joined the group.

"My little one," the mother repeated, one hand softly patting Eugene's tumbled curls, "tell me, what would you do if Hadrian, the Emperor, should order you to bow to the idol he adores?"

The boy sprang to his feet, his eyes glowing. "I would rather die than give

up God," he cried! "But, my mother," he continued, "why does not the Emperor leave us alone? What are we doing to harm him? We obey his laws, all save this one."

"Ah, but that is just the point, little brother," Julianus broke in. "He claims that his gods will not answer when he prays to them because we are Christians, and are allowed to live. The time may come soon, Eugene, when you will have to carry out the promise you have just made. May God give us all strength in that day," he added reverently.

There was a heavy rap at the door, and in answer to the "Salve," or "Welcome," of the Romans, a captain of the guard entered the room.

"Hadrian calls for you," he said, "come."

The mother bowed her head. "We will go with you," she replied. There was no sign of fear in her eyes, and as little

Eugene placed his hand confidingly in hers, he drew her down to whisper, "I will keep my promise, mother."

Guarded by the soldiers, the mother and her seven noble boys made their way to the court room. A crowd had gathered to witness the trial, but the boys showed no excitement. One after the other they were asked, "Will you bow to the idols?" One after the other gave the brave answer, "Never, for Christ is our King."

When the question came to Eugene, the Emperor stopped him. "Think, boy," he urged, "think what it means to say no. You will be put to death in great pain, and everyone will think of you as a traitor. But if you bow only for an instant at the altar of Mars, all will praise you as a loyal Roman. Think of this before you answer."

The boy threw back his head and smiled into his mother's eyes. "I would rather die than give up God," he said.

Hadrian's face grew stern, "You have chosen death, you shall have your will," he cried.

One by one the boys gave their lives to God, and last of all Symphorosa, having suffered a sevenfold martyrdom in witnessing that of her sons, gave her life to the Master in willing sacrifice.

Feast, July eighteenth.

Eulalia, The Pure of Heart

THE stars were coming out one by one, like lights shining through the far windows of heaven. Fleecy little clouds, like baby angels, flew softly between heaven and earth.

Eulalia watched them, with an eager desire to be as near to God as they were. There was a path to heaven she knew, that was swift and sure—the path of martyrdom. But her parents, afraid lest she offer her life too freely, had taken her away from the city of persecution, to this quiet little village of Emeretia. And now she was so many miles away, so far away, from that dear path.

Suddenly a light crept into her eyes, and she clapped her hands softly. She would find a way to the city, and tell the

judge that she loved Jesus. Then she would die—oh, so gladly, and speed over the road of martyrdom to God.

Quickly she gathered her cloak about her and sped out into the night. She looked up at the stars as she ran, with a thrill of joy at the thought that soon she would be beyond their light, kneeling in the white radiance of God's love. She could almost hear His voice calling her, "Come, child of My Heart—come," and the thought lent wings to her feet.

The still night air, sweet with forest odors, blew softly about her, and seemed to urge her onward swifter still. At last the lights of the city mingled with the faint flush of coming dawn at the horizon's edge—her journey was nearly done.

The sun was high in the skies when she reached the court room where the judge was sitting. Almost exhausted from her journey, her curls tumbled over her shoulders, her eyes wide and eager with loving

zeal, she ran towards the idol of Jupiter, and pointed at it with a scornful finger.

"Is that the god you adore," she cried, "a thing made of stone? He Who created heaven and earth is God, and Him only should we serve."

The angered judge commanded that the child be punished for a time on the rack. The soldiers obeyed the order, but the little maid, strong in her love for Jesus crucified, murmured only His dear name as the pain increased. She was then whipped with heavy scourges, and at last condemned to be burned at the stake.

A great fire was kindled, and Eulalia was bound close in the midst of the flames. Her arms were free and she crossed them on her breast as she bowed her head in prayer. The scarlet tongues leaped and writhed about her, but warmer than the flames glowed the heat of God's love in her girlish heart.

The suffering, though keen, was not

for long, and the eager little soul passed beyond the starlight, to be at rest forever in the arms of God.

Feast, December tenth.

Felix, Boy Saint of Happiness

LIKE Saint Eugene, Felix was one of seven brothers, and his mother was a noble matron of Rome. She was called Felicitas, which means happiness, and Felix was named for her.

From the time he was a wee boy, he had learned at his mother's knee the true meaning of happiness, and whenever he came to her in tears to show her the big bump on his head or to tell her of some boyish trouble, she would comfort him by saying gently, "Felix, my little son, God does not want us to be always happy here. If we really love Him, we should be willing to suffer sometimes for Him on earth, that we may be truly happy with Him in heaven."

With the passing years the boyish heart of Felix expanded as a flower in the sun-

shine of God's love. At school and at play he was a favorite, until on a certain day it became rumored that he was a Christian. Felix heard the rumor, but forgot it almost as soon as it was spoken, and went about his study and fun as happily as before.

Early one morning the blow fell. He was on his way to school, and the path he was following led him through a cool, dim stretch of wood, then turned abruptly to the great Roman road. His heart was full of happiness, that deep, peaceful happiness that comes from God alone. The sunlight played through the gnarled old trees. The dewy, fragrant blossoms at his feet and the soft morning breezes blowing about him spoke of joy and content. A snatch of song was on his lips, and his sandaled feet scarcely pressed the moss-grown path.

Suddenly through the trees he caught the glint of steel. Two soldiers were

coming towards him. His heart stood still. For one instant he halted in fear. Then he braced himself with the sweet bravery of a soldier of Christ. Behind him lay the peace of the woods, before him conflict, but the victor's palm was happiness eternal!

The soldiers grasped him roughly by the arms. "The judge calls for you," one said roughly, "come."

The lad obeyed. By their side he traveled the old Roman highroad. Curious eyes turned to gaze at him, but he never saw them. His thoughts were fixed on the trial to come.

The great court room was reached at last, and there his mother and brothers awaited him. They also were to be condemned to death because of their love for Christ Jesus.

The harsh words were spoken, "Felicitas, renounce Christ and bow to the gods of Rome or thou and thy sons shalt die."

Softly his mother's voice answered, "I can never deny my Lord and my God."

One by one the boys were questioned, and one by one they gave their answer.

Felix was condemned to be beaten to death with clubs. Throughout the long, terrible torture, when the blows were heaviest, the mother's heart beat in earnest prayer for her boy. As he fell at last, victor, though dying, at the feet of the judge, he smiled feebly towards her.

A long ray of sunlight lit up his white face and she caught the scarce whispered words, "Mother, I am so happy." The dark eyes closed, there was a softly drawn breath and the eager, boyish soul sped forth to enjoy forever the happiness he had so nobly won.

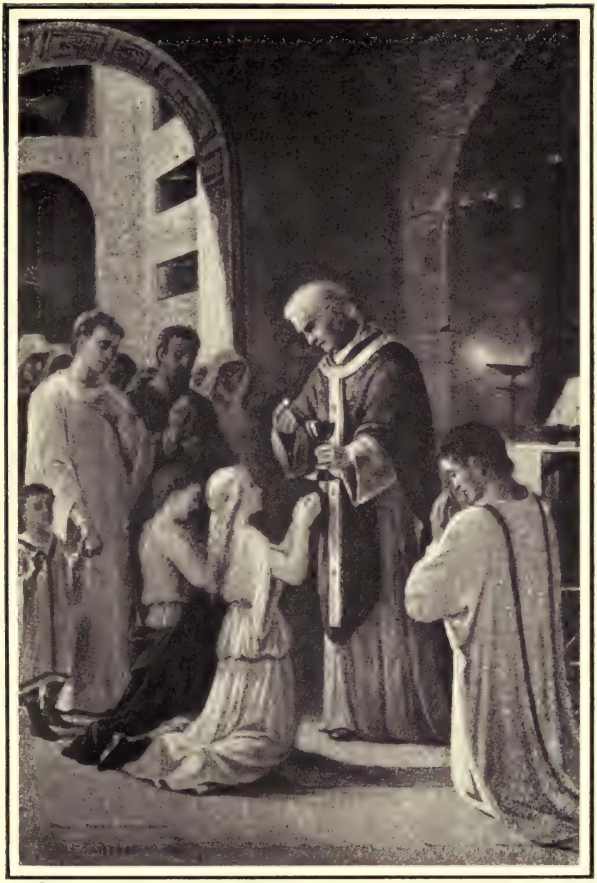
Feast, July tenth.

Faith, The Brave

IT was a dreary day in mid-winter. In the narrow passages of the catacombs the rough stone walls were streaked with dampness, and the cold wind swept sharply through the rocks piled up to hide the entrance.

Toiling slowly along the dark, uneven passage was a Roman mother, a sleeping child in her arms. One hand was outstretched before her, as she half blindly felt her way. Over and over again she whispered softly to herself the name of Jesus. Brave though she was, and used to danger, the bitter cold and stillness of the catacombs filled her with terror, and every few steps she paused to listen for other footfalls than her own.

At last a faint glimmer of candlelight in the distance pointed like the star of Bethlehem, long ago, to the tiny cave-



"In the quiet Catacombs where the Christians prayed, and where there was peace in the midst of the battle."

home of the King of kings, and she knew she was nearing her journey's end. The light streamed from the entrance to a small chapel, where a silver-haired priest was praying with bowed head and outstretched arms before a rude altar. Near him was a baptismal font, cut into the rocky floor.

"Father," she whispered softly. He heard and arose from his knees. Smiling, he came towards her and held out his arms for the child. "Not God's little one yet," he said gently, "but soon to be. What name shall we give thee when thou art made God's child?" he said to the wee form in his arms.

The mother's eyes were full of happy tears. "Call her Faith, Holy Father," she cried, "that my child may hold that treasure dearer even than life."

A moment later, and the clear cold water touched the little brow and the solemn words were spoken, "I baptise

thee, Faith, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Kneeling before the altar, the mother held her child to her heart for an instant, then outstretched her arms in surrender and laid the little one at the foot of the rough cross that hung on the wall. "I give her to You, Jesus," she whispered. "Keep her soul always as pure as it is to-day."

The years passed, and baby Faith blossomed into maidenhood, true and sweet in the midst of the wickedness about her as a snow-white lily in a bed of rank weeds. She held her heart aloft for the King's love. Hope and Charity were her two little sisters, and the mother used to call them her trinity of daughters.

At last came the day so longed for by the brave little Christians of Rome, the great day when they were called to lay down their lives for the sake of Jesus Christ, Who had died for them. The

three girls were brought captive together to the great court room, where they stood fearlessly before the judge.

Faith, the eldest, was tried first. Twelve short years had she spent on earth, but her courage was as dauntless, her resolve as high as though she had faced the storms of half a century. She was condemned to be thrown into a cauldron of boiling pitch. The brutal order was carried out, and she remained unharmed in the midst of the terrific heat.

The judge, unmoved by the evident touch of God's hand, ordered her to be beheaded. The child kissed her mother, and was held to her heart once more, as so long ago before the little altar of the catacombs, then was surrendered once more to the thorn-crowned King. And the girl passed joyously to that eternal land where faith is changed to vision and the soul is at home with God.

Feast, August first.

Guy, The Wonder Worker

GUY dropped his stylus, leaving a Roman character only half formed on the waxen tablet before him. "Are you then a Christian, Modestus?" he cried.

The old man bowed his head. "I am," he answered simply.

A puzzled look crept into the boy's eyes. "But Christ was nailed to a cross," he said, "and Jupiter and Mars are still in our great temples. O Modestus, which is the true God?"

The master smiled, and a strange glow touched his worn old face. "Jesus Christ, Who died to give us life, Who rose again from the dead, and Who reigns eternally in heaven, is true God," he answered reverently.

Guy was silent, stirred by the love and

faith in the old man's eyes. The little school was very still, and the master's face, strong and fearless, was turned from the boy, as he stood looking toward the sunset. Cloud roses were massed low in the western sky, waiting the good-night touch of the Eternal Gardener, and a golden glory shone in the path of the dying sun. The boy laid his hand on his teacher's arm. "It is the gateway of heaven where Jesus is," he whispered, and then he added impulsively, "O Modestus, teach me to love Him, for He died for me, too."

A few days later Guy was baptised. From that moment God gifted him with miraculous power. Devils fled before him as he made the sign of the cross; sight was given to the blind and health to the sick.

When Hylas, the lad's father, was told that his son had become a Christian, he became very angry. He tried by every

means in his power to force his son to bow before Jupiter once more. Bravely the boy refused.

As Modestus prayed that night, an angel stood by his side. The room was flooded with silver light, and a deep peace fell on the old man's soul. All unafraid, he raised his head. "What is God's will?" he asked softly.

With a tender smile, the angel pointed to the sleeping boy. "Awake the child and follow me. God wills it."

The wondrous voice fell full and sweet in the little room. As its music died away, Modestus knelt by the bed and folded Guy in his arms. "Child," he whispered, "we must go. God wills it."

Obediently, the boy arose. He stood still a moment in his soft, white tunic, his dark eyes filled with tears. Then he ran lightly towards his father's door and knelt by the threshold. "Good-by, father," he whispered,—a sob in his throat.

Modestus wrapped a cloak about him, and together they fled out into the night, following the silvery trail pointed out by their angel guide.

Months passed. In the great Roman palace the daughter of the Emperor lay on a bed of pain, tormented by a devil. Her sweet face was white as the pillow on which she rested. The doctors feared that death was near. In vain were sacrifices offered to the idols—there was no relief. The devil cried that he would leave only by the command of Guy.

Almost in despair, the Emperor sent for the boy. Guy at once obeyed the summons, and in a few hours was knocking at the palace gate. When shown to the sick room he quietly knelt by the bedside of the stricken princess, his boyish head bent low in prayer, then stood erect, and slowly made the sign of the cross.

The Emperor eagerly watched his child.

He saw a sudden change pass over her sweet, still face. The tortured lines relaxed; a soft flush crept into her cheeks, and she opened her eyes with a glad smile. "Father, the evil spirit has gone," she whispered.

Through the palace the news spread, and every one flocked to see the boy who had done so marvelous a thing. But the Emperor was puzzled. He called the boy aside to ask him by what power he had driven the devil forth.

Reverently Guy answered, "By the cross of my Saviour, Jesus Christ." Furious to think a Christian had healed his daughter, the ruler condemned the boy to death. Modestus was condemned at the same time, and, side by side, master and pupil passed beyond the sunset to rest forever with the Lord Whom they had served.

Feast, June fifteenth.

St. Vitus, or Guy.

Germaine, The Shepherdess

THE door of the little hut was open, and a faint odor of clover blossoms and new-mown hay was borne in on the still night air. A bar of silver moonlight shone through the window and rested on a rough bed in the corner where a young mother lay dying. By the bedside knelt a little child, gently stroking the work-hardened hands that now lay so still on the worn blanket.

"Germaine, my little daughter," the mother whispered softly, "Jesus is calling, —I am going home—to Him. Can you look up bravely, and say, 'Dear God, You know best?"

The child's eyes filled with tears, but the noble little heart never faltered. "God knows best, mother," she whispered.

When the first faint flush of dawn

broke over the eastern hills the child was alone. Jesus had called the mother. She was at rest with Him.

Oh, how sad and lonely for Germaine were the days that followed! Her father, a hard-working shepherd, married again, and gave scarcely a thought to the frail little daughter, who so needed his love. Long days at work in the fields, with poor food and no care, so weakened the little one that she was soon but a shadow of her former self. Great sores and ulcers broke out over her body, and her step-mother, in anger at her changed appearance, drove her from home.

Alone with her sheep, suffering, and keenly sensitive to the harsh treatment of her parents, the child's thoughts turned more and more to her home in heaven, where her own dear mother was waiting for her. As the shadows fell at sunset, and cool winds from the sea swept over the hills, she would watch the lights gleam

out, one by one, in the distant cottages, and long for one little light to shine a welcome for her.

In the little village church, bowed low before the golden door behind which Jesus was hidden for her, Germaine spent all her free moments. Softly the little bare feet would tread the old stone floor, and close to the wooden rail, so near to Jesus' Heart, cold, hunger, suffering,—all were forgotten in His Love.

The crusts of bread that were her only food she shared with other little shepherd maids whose needs were as great as her own, and her sweet smile whispered hope and courage into hearts that were lonely and sad.

The lambs loved the hard, brown hand that fed them, or rested gently on their shaggy wool. It was a pretty sight to see a wee lamb, tired and cold, nestle in her arms.

Of the terrible sufferings the ulcers

caused, the little maid never spoke, nor of the long nights of pain. That was Jesus' secret and hers. Day after day as she knelt before the rosy flame of the sanctuary lamp her longing to be with Him increased. At last Jesus answered her prayer. Germaine fell asleep in the arms of God, to awake at home, at last, face to face with the dear Lord Who was her "reward exceeding great."

Feast, June fifteenth.

Hugh, Martyr of The Cross

THE sun threw an aureole about his sunny hair as he stood before the open door of his home, his face lifted for his mother's kiss. A little lad of only eight, he seemed born to diffuse brightness through earth's gloomy places. As he passed along the village street his feet scarcely touched the ground for very joy. Snatches of songs arose to his lips, and his clear brown eyes shone with the light of God's sunshine, a sunshine that came from a heart as pure as the mountain snow.

A corner of the street was turned, and an instant later a band of Jews sprang on the little lad, gagged and bound him, and led him away. It was on Friday, the day blessed by our Lord in His death for us. At three o'clock in the afternoon, the child was fastened upon his cross to

die. The nails were driven in, the cross was raised, and the Jews gathered about to mock at the lithe little form so still in its agony.

The sweet face was drawn with pain, but uplifted still to the summer skies as if to look beyond the blue curtain and see the King beloved Who was waiting to bestow upon His little soldier the palm of martyrdom. The minutes dragged slowly on,—oh, so slowly!—but no murmur of pain escaped the boy; only again and again, the name of Jesus.

How many white-winged angels must have been gathered about that cross, reverently watching the child martyr. "O good Master," we can almost hear them whisper, "call him soon, and let us bring him to You." The moment came, the sweet eyes closed, the head drooped forward, and the soldier answered to the roll call of the King.

Feast, July twenty-seventh.

Hope, The Little Sister

HOPE was the younger sister of Faith, and was only ten years old when she won the martyr's palm by the side of the older girl. The child watched her sister die, and the hot tears brimmed over in her eyes. Her turn would come next, and she breathed a prayer to her guardian angel.

At the end of the court room stood a great furnace, and a guard was heaping fuel on the already blazing fire.

"Ho, man," cried the judge, "here is another Christian, throw her to feed the flames!"

The soldier stepped forward and lifted the child in his arms. Little Hope, trembling from head to foot, could only whisper over and over again the name of Jesus. The furnace door was wide and

she could see the scarlet flames leaping within the iron grill.

"Hold, Junius," the judge commanded. Then to the child he continued, "Are you afraid of the fire?"

"Yes," she answered softly.

"Well, save yourself," he said. "Bow to Jupiter, and you shall be as free this instant as the winds that blow."

Hope clasped her hands. "I am afraid of the fire," she replied, "but Jesus will help me to bear the pain."

The judge turned away. "Do your work, man," he commanded. And the guard obeyed.

But God so loved His little martyr that He sent His angel to part the flames and shield her from their heat. The fire circled her form as a glowing frame, and with a glad smile of triumph, Hope stood, as the judge had said she might, should she bow to Jupiter, "free as the winds that blow."

Once more Hope awaited her sentence before the judge, and heard the order given that she should be beheaded.

This time Hope was unafraid. Her eyes were wet with glad tears, her cheeks flushed with eager love. Oh, how she longed to see and be near the Master Who had so wondrously shown her His protection!

She knelt down. With one hand she held her little cross closer, with the other she drew aside her soft hair.

Another instant and God's angels welcomed her to that fair land where Faith, her elder sister, watched in love for her coming.

Feast, August first.

Ignatius, Child of God

THE hill was thronged with people, some idly curious, some full of sorrow, others brutally thirsting for the sight of blood. On the summit, facing the sea and bound to stakes, were twenty-two priests, awaiting the executioner's torch that would blaze their way to heaven. Near by knelt a group of Christians united in prayer that they, too, might stand firm in their hour of trial. The hot sun beat down pitilessly, and the sea like a mirror threw back its torrid rays.

Suddenly Father Spinola raised his head. "Where is my little Ignatius?" he cried. His clear voice rang over the great mob and there was an instant's calm.

A woman who had been kneeling in the midst of the group of Christians arose and came forward, a little child half hidden

under her cloak. The boy was dressed as for a festival, and his big eyes, though grave and wondering, showed no sign of fear.

"See, Father," the good mother said, "here is Ignatius." Her voice broke for an instant, but she went on bravely. "I offer all I have to God, my life and my little child."

The priest smiled, and there was a light too radiant for earth in his strong eyes. "God be with you and give you strength," he said gently.

The mother turned to the boy. "My son," she cried, "look up and see the one who made you a child of God by Baptism. Go to him, my little Ignatius, and ask him to bless you."

The child obeyed. He loved the priest, and all unafraid, even of the great chains and the soldiers, he knelt at Father Spinola's feet.

With his baby hands crossed on his

breast he cried in his childish treble, "Bless me, dear Father, ask God to bless me."

The first tears that had come to the priest's eyes in years came now, as he blessed the little one. His closely bound hands bled freely in his effort to make the sign of the cross. "Go to your mother," he said tenderly, "and be brave for Jesus' sake."

With a bright smile the boy went back to his mother's side, and knelt once more under the folds of her cloak.

A wave of something like pity swept over the crowd, and the executioners, seeing it, hastened their bloody work. With sharpened axes, they came quickly toward the group of Christians. There was only time for a swift prayer. In a few moments four martyrs lay headless on the hill. One was the mother of Ignatius.

The boy closed his eyes and his baby lips moved. The priest watched, his

heart raised in prayer for the frail little soul.

The dark eyes opened and were lifted to heaven, and the little arms spread wide like a cross. "Jesus," he whispered, and the sharp sword fell.

The baby martyr was with God.

Feast, Blessed Charles Spinola, S. J. and Companions, September eleventh.

Imelda, The First Communicant

"BUT you are too young, my little one," the priest said gravely. "Wait, and perhaps in another year Jesus will come to you."

Imelda was silent, but great tears welled up in her eyes and rolled all unheeded down her cheeks. A whole year before she could make her First Communion! A long, long year! Without a word she turned away and walked slowly down the corridor.

The priest watched, with a gentle smile, as the little white robe fluttered through the chapel arch, never dreaming how heavy a cross he had laid on the child's shoulder.

Although only eleven, Imelda had been admitted to the Dominican Order, and had already received the white habit of a

novice. Her love for our dear Lord was very deep and tender, and it was her greatest joy to spend long hours in His sacramental presence. Now in her sorrow it was to Him she fled for comfort.

"Jesus, I want You," she sobbed. "O my dearest Lord, I cannot live without You."

A rosy bar of light from the long western window touched the slight form tenderly, and the faint, sweet fragrance of flowers made the gates of heaven seem very near. Slowly the red glow faded, and soft, gray twilight enfolded the altar. Still the little novice knelt there, her habit misty white in the growing gloom.

Far down the corridor rang out the vesper bell, deep, and sweet, and full. Then the child moved. Obedience called her, and she stood erect, but with bowed head, in her appointed place for the divine office.

One by one, the nuns filed into the

chapel. One by one, starry candles pierced the darkness, and then the solemn vesper chant rose on the peaceful air.

All that night Imelda tossed restlessly on her hard bed, sobbing even in her sleep, and waking with the dear name of Jesus on her lips. Oh, how she longed for His coming! And then like the ceaseless moaning of the waves on the shore came the thought: not for a long, long year, Imelda.

Early in the morning, she was in her place in the chapel, bright-eyed, feverish with desire. It was the feast of the Ascension, and all the Religious were to receive Holy Communion.

When the bell rang out at the "Domini, non sum dignus," the little novice bowed her head low.

With reverent step the white-robed Dominicans passed by her stall, and went to the altar rail. She heard the low whispered Confiteor of the little server,

"Joan of Arc in prison, and Imelda in her cloister, though parted by many years, were alike in their love for Christ in the Blessed Sacrament."

and heard the key turn in the golden door. The echo of her dream throbbed again in her heart, a year, a long dreary year without Jesus. Ah, why could not the priest understand! She was not too young to love God, to give her life to Him, to listen to His sweet Voice calling and bidding her come to Him. It seemed to her as though Jesus were standing at the closed door of her heart, and knocking, and she must bid Him, Whom she longed to receive, stay without. Was it because she was so very sinful? Her innocent heart knew not sin, though she often wept over the small faults she called so wrong. The little frame trembled with sorrow.

The priest turned from the altar, the upraised Sacred Host in his hand. Imelda lifted her head, and threw out her arms with a gesture of love and longing.

"O Jesus, come," she whispered.

And Jesus came. Swiftly in a trail of

silver light, hidden under the round white Host, He came, and made His home for the first time in the soul He loved.

The child knelt motionless with outstretched arms and parted lips, her heart a-quiver with love.

The joy was too great. Once with Jesus, with Him always, was the will of God. The little heart, in all its virginal purity, was stilled in its very outpouring of gladness. Stilled to the world, but living to Jesus, to rest close to His Sacred Heart for all eternity.

Feast, September sixteenth.

Januarius, The Eldest

BEFORE the idol of Mars many worshipers were thronged, and the fragrance of incense filled the temple. Above the people sat the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. On either side stood the guards, glittering in the silver armor of Rome. All were awaiting a signal, when there came the expected blare of trumpets.

It was the hour of sacrifice. A priest of Mars, his scarlet robes half veiled in incense, approached the altar of the god. All heads were bowed low as he laid the victim before the idol, and raised his keen blade. There was a moment's silence as the knife fell, and the priest bent forward to see, it was believed, what answer the god would give to the sacrifice. Raising the knife, still dripping with blood, he cried fiercely: "Death to the Christians! Mars is angry!"

The Emperor was startled. He was a warrior, and Mars was the god of war. If Mars so willed it, the Christians must die. He was not naturally a bloodthirsty man, but he loved his country and the delights of war, and fearing, lest if Mars be angry, the enemy would prevail, he wished to appease the god. He turned to the pagan priests who, with dark faces and clenched hands, were waiting his word, and gave a prompt order. Immediately soldiers and spies left the temple in search of Christian victims. All about the near country they searched, and not in vain.

Close to the temple lived a noble Roman mother, Felicitas, with her seven sons. One by one they were captured and brought before the Emperor. Bright little Felix was one of the number, but the eldest was Januarius, and the mother leaned on his arm as they entered the temple porch. He whispered a word in

her ear as they stood before the throne, and she smiled bravely into the beautiful boyish face, so nearly on a level with her own.

Angry looks and scornful words met them on every side. Blood was still flowing from the altar.

'Felicitas,'' spoke the Emperor, ''the god is angry that you are a Christian. Go to the altar and bow before Mars, or you and your sons shall be put to the torture.''

The mother smiled a little, and turned to her boys. With her arms opened wide, as though she would embrace them all, she cried earnestly, ''My sons, be brave! You know that you are all I have. My love for you is stronger than my life! But I had rather a thousand times see you dead than see you stoop to sin.''

She paused, and let her eyes rest on each of her sons in turn. All were about her, but Januarius was nearest. He

folded her in his arms. "My mother," he whispered, "fear not for us. Jesus is our King, and in His strength we will conquer."

The Emperor harshly interrupted. "What is your answer?" he said. "Will you bow to Mars?"

Like a trumpet call came the cry "No."

Then sentence fell from the Emperor's lips, a sentence cruel as the demon god could prompt. Januarius was to be beaten to death with loaded whips, and equally terrible were the plans announced for the punishment of the others.

As eldest, Januarius desired to be first to suffer. Picked soldiers, strong of arm and hard of heart, swung stroke after stroke on the slight young shoulders. His face was turned to the blood-stained altar, and it seemed to him, as he fell at last, exhausted and dying, that all the world was blood red too.

Believing him to be dead, the soldiers

turned to the others, but death came slowly to the strong young heart. A crimson path stretched out before him, but a Voice of infinite sweetness called him to arise and come.

Was it a dream, or was he lying in his own blood, too weak to obey? Far, far away he heard soft strains of music, and the sweet Voice called again.

With a wonderful effort, he half raised himself from the ground. "I am coming, my Jesus," his dying lips whispered—then he fell back. The red path of martyrdom faded away. The boy had conquered in the strength of Jesus his King.

Feast, July tenth.

Julia, The Slave.

"NOW, slave, about your work—come to me at sundown." He turned his head with lazy curiosity as the white-robed figure passed swiftly under the vine-hung arch on her way to the servants' quarters. So she was a Christian! How proudly she had confessed it, and what a light had come into her eyes!

He had bought her only a few weeks past from a Vandal slave dealer, who had captured many a maiden of high rank during the burning of Carthage. While waiting for the auction Eusebius had noted in the midst of the group a slight, dark-haired girl, who had one arm about the shoulders of a weeping child. Her noble bearing and pure face had attracted him at once, and he had eagerly paid

the price demanded, and brought her to his home.

And now for over a month Julia had been a slave. She was so docile and patient, whether in the kitchen or in her master's presence, that every one loved her.

Now, as she reached the servants' quarters, her heart beat with a strange, insistent gladness. She was a Christian and Eusebius knew it. Perhaps martyrdom was near at hand. She paused on the threshold of the squalid cabin. From within came the sound of noisy laughter, coarse oaths,—and worse; but the girl scarcely heard. The wind stirred her white robe, and touched her dark hair as in a caress. Her eyes were starry with happiness, and a delicate color bloomed in her cheeks.

"For You, my Jesus, for You," she whispered, and stepped within the cabin. She was too true, too pure for sin to stay,

and the evil noises ceased as the slaves crowded about her.

All that day and for many days Julia longed for the summons to death that never came. She was too valuable in her master's sight.

Some months later, with several other slaves, she was commanded to go with Eusebius on a trip to Corsica, where public feasts were to be held in honor of a great idol. When the island was reached, Julia begged to be allowed to remain on shipboard, and Eusebius consented.

Alone, on the deck, her thoughts turned to God. The wild songs and laughter of the feast on the shore were borne to her over the water, but her prayer dulled their sound. "How long, O Lord, how long?" was the half tremulous cry on her lips. "When may I come to You,—call me, bid me hasten,—if it be Your Will."

Slowly, she walked up and down along the far side of the ship. Here the sounds

of merry-making were less distinct, and the soft lapping of the waves quieted her, as a mother's lullaby would soothe a restless child.

Suddenly she was startled by a noisy blast blown on a horn. It was the hour for the sacrifice to the idol. The revels grew wilder, and Julia shuddered as she looked on them.

When they were ended, Felix, the governor, asked to be shown over the ship. When he saw Julia he admired her, but on learning that she was a Christian grew very angry. She was dragged to the island and condemned to be crucified.

Julia smiled when she heard her sentence. The hour had come at last. A rough cross was quickly fashioned and the girl's form was made fast to it. Julia's eyes closed to the dark faces about her. Heaven was so near, only a little while and she would be with God.

The time was swift in passing and the

sweet girl martyr was slave no longer to the master of earth, but bound by links of eternal love to the divine Master in heaven.

Feast, May twenty-third.

Kenelm, The Boy King

THE boy king sat on his throne, his eyes big with wonder. He was a very little king, only seven years old, and he could not understand why every one, even his grown up sister, Quindrede, bowed low before him.

Only a little while ago, his father had been king, and then his father had died, and he had known his first great sadness. A lump rose in his boyish throat as he thought of the grave out under the trees where he had seen them lay his father's body. And now he was the king.

That morning the old priest who lived at the palace had told him what being king meant, and when he had heard all, they had gone together into the great chapel to beg the help of the King of kings.

The place was dark and gloomy. The windows were of stained glass, and the hangings of deep red, only the ruby glow of the sanctuary lamp shed light and comfort as a little star. The altar rested within its tender radiance, and the golden door with its parted curtain shone softly in the gloom.

Kenelm's eyes were wet with tears, and his lips quivering, but at the thought of the dear King who held His court with His Blessed Mother so near, and Who was always ready to give help and comfort, a smile forced itself to his lips.

"Dear Jesus," he whispered, "I will try to be a good king. Help me to learn all I ought to know."

Poor little lad, he was old before his time, and all the gracious joy of childhood seemed to have passed him by.

Then came the coronation. The gold crown was placed on his head, and he received a king's anointing, and now he

was given, for the first time, the homage of his people.

He did not want to be a king. He sat listlessly on his father's throne, clothed in stiff brocade, and longed for the fields, and the merry stream in the woods, and the songs of the birds he loved. Then he remembered that quiet hour in the chapel, when he had promised God that he would be a good king. He straightened his little shoulders with a sudden movement of decision and his childish lips grew firm. He turned to the priest by his side. "I had almost forgotten my promise," he whispered. "It is so hard to be a king!"

The long ceremony ended at last, and Kenelm was free. He ran at once to his sister's arms to be comforted.

The months wore slowly on. The little king must spend long hours with his tutor, Ascobert, before he might spend longer, sweeter hours with the priest, who was friend, counselor and father.

The priest and the child rambled in the woods together and talked of the great God Who had created all the beauty they so enjoyed, for love of them.

The summer passed, and the fall, and the cold winter days set in, when the snow lay deep over the fields of England. One morning when Kenelm had gone out as usual for his walk he did not return. Noon passed, the short afternoon faded into dark. Still he came not and there was no word from him. The old priest searched in vain for the little lad. Only an occasional footprint, half hidden by the drifting snow, showed that he had passed that way.

Suddenly there was a flash of brilliant light ahead of them between the blowing branches.

A quiet boyish form lay in its radiance, white as the snow about it. The priest sprang forward and folded the lad in his arms. The little heart was still. The

baby king was with God. A cruel hand had taken his life, and Mercia mourned her boy ruler.

Deep in the snowy woods, near the spot where the body was found, was a rocky well.

God gifted its waters with healing power, as a token of His love for His little Saint.

At a touch of its clear, cold stream health was restored to the sick and sight to the blind. It was known as Saint Kenelm's Well, and even today, after the lapse of centuries, the spot is dear to the heart of Catholic England.

Feast, July seventh.

Katherine, The Philosopher

IT was Christmas night, hundreds of years ago.

Katherine, a little maiden of pagan Alexandria, tossed restlessly in her sleep. It seemed to her that she was drifting far away, and that dark clouds were all about her. There was no one near to give her help. Swiftly, yet more swiftly, she felt herself borne along, and the darkness and the silence grew deeper.

Suddenly there was a rift in the clouds, and she could see the stars shining. Faint, sweet music touched the night air like a caress, and the girl felt herself sinking slowly towards the earth. Before her in the hills nestled a tiny cave. A rough gate barred the entrance, but through it the cold wind swept pitilessly.

The frost-covered ground glistened like silver in the starlight.

Within the cave stood a Mother with a Child in her arms. A glory shone about them, and the face of the Infant was so fair, so divine, that Katherine fell on her knees. The little arms were outstretched to embrace her, then the Child turned away in sorrow.

"I cannot come to thee, for thou art not mine," a sweet voice whispered. "Katherine, learn of Me."

The cave faded away, the angels' voices ceased, and Katherine awoke with the cry on her lips, "Who art Thou, Lord?"

Her prayer rang out in the silent night, and Jesus heard.

In His own sweet way He taught her of Himself. Soon she was made His child forever by baptism.

Then on another wondrous night, the vision returned. Once more she knelt at the feet of Mary the Mother. This time

the Child Jesus smiled on the pure face upturned so longingly to His own. He placed a ring on her finger, and she heard His sweet voice proclaim, "Katherine, thou art Mine."

Now Maximian, the pagan Emperor, who held his court at Alexandria, heard of Katherine and her wonderful beauty. He summoned her to appear before him. The girl obeyed.

She was received with royal magnificence. Gorgeous colors hung from the walls, rare jewels adorned Maximian's throne and flashed from his scepter and crown. Katherine's eyes were cast down, her hands loosely clasped before her. Her long hair fell softly over her shoulders, nearly touching the hem of her white cloak. She wore no jewels, but her pure face shone with a beauty fairer than any earth could give.

"Art thou a Christian?" asked the amazed Emperor.

"Then gravely, she questioned them. But they had no answer for the wisdom of Jesus Christ."

"I am a Christian," Katherine answered simply.

Unwilling at once to condemn her to torture, the Emperor commanded his most learned philosophers to argue with her. One after another they came into the court, bowed to the Emperor, and unrolled their sheets of papyrus. Deeply learned were they in the wisdom of the gods, and they frowned severely at the girlish defender of the Faith. Firmly she answered the questions they put to her, and in her own turn, with calm simplicity, questioned them. Vainly they turned to their papyrus rolls for an answer. Their false gods had no reply to give to the wisdom of Jesus Christ.

In the end they yielded. "We too believe in Christ, the Lord," they cried exultantly. "He alone is Eternal Truth." Suffering and death they knew awaited them, but a philosopher feared not death. Wrapping their mantles about them, they

once again bowed to the Emperor and nobly confessed their belief in the God they had only just learned to love.

Katherine watched them, her eyes alight with a strange joy. Then with a courage only equaled by her holiness, heard her own sentence. She was condemned to be broken on a huge spiked wheel.

She was bound hand and foot with heavy cords. Then suddenly the wheel flew into a thousand pieces, and Katherine stood erect and unhurt. Oh, what a light filled her eyes, and how joyous her mien as she again faced the Emperor!

Death came at last by the sword, with scarcely an instant of pain, and the girlish philosopher led her converts to the throne of God.

Feast, November twenty-fifth.

Louis, Little Martyr of Japan

IT was a strange little school-room of Japan, all latticed and open to the evening breeze, with no desks, nor chairs, nor blackboards, nor teacher's table. Three little lads sat cross-legged on the bare floor, their dark heads bent low over a highly colored picture of the Crucifixion. The priest sitting on the bamboo doorstep had just told them the world-old, yet ever new, story of the death of Jesus, and now a quiet had fallen over teacher and pupils.

Before them lay a hill, its brown summit in strange contrast to the green fields and nodding flowers about its base. In the gray shadows of coming night, the hill had but one suggestion to each of them,—Calvary, where Jesus had died. Half dreamily they pictured the throngs

of people, and high against the dark clouds the three crosses.

"Oh, Father," whispered Louis, "if we only might die for Jesus as He died for us."

The priest smiled gravely. "Perhaps you may," he answered. "The Mikado is angry with us even now. It would take but a little provocation to make him put us all to death."

The boy's dark eyes flashed and he threw open his arms. Looking toward the bare little hill, he cried, "I love God so, but I have known about Him such a little while! Would it be too big a prayer to ask that I might die on a cross for Him? I know I am not good enough to ask so much, but if you ask it too, Father, He may listen to us." The eager voice sunk to a pleading whisper, and as he ended, he fell to his knees at the priest's side.

A great joy flashed in the missionary's face. "We will ask God together, little

children," he said. And when, on the following morning, he raised the white Host aloft, a prayer went up from their hearts in unison, that if persecution came, they might die by crucifixion.

They were merry, natural lads, these boys in far Japan, not at all "Goody goody." At play, their laugh rang out freely, and their muscles were hard and firm from long training and much exercise. To see them race against the wind, their eyes flashing, their cheeks glowing, every nerve bent on winning, one would never dream they ever thought of anything more serious.

But even their play was offered as a prayer, and it was all the merrier for the offering. At daybreak each morning, as they served the missionary's Mass, all the day, with its work and fun, was given to Christ the King.

Strange rumors began to be spread about against the Christians, and the boyish

prayers grew more earnest. For the last time Louis rang the altar bell, and for the last time, though they knew it not, they received our dear Lord in Holy Communion.

Scarcely had Mass ended when a band of Japanese soldiers tore down the frail bamboo wall, and bound the priest and his comrades, to bring them before the Mikado.

As the gray light deepened at the close of that long day of trial, they were condemned to be crucified on the little bare hill they had seen from their school-room door. Quickly the crosses were prepared, and with more of gladness than of sorrow, the lads held the rough wood to their breasts. "Jesus listened,—Jesus heard," they cried joyously.

With a last blessing for the lads he loved so dearly, the priest gave his life for God. Then through the sharp hours of pain, Louis, Thomas and Anthony encouraged

each other, by repeating aloud the prayers the priest had taught them. One by one, the soldiers left the hill,—and at last in the still, cool twilight God called His little martyrs to Himself.

Feast, Martyrs of Japan, February ninth.

Lucy, The Devoted Daughter

THE silver gloom of a Roman twilight was settling over the snow-clad hill, and the wind had blown the flakes into drifts to hide the path. One arm about her mother, who seemed too frail for the weary climb, a girl of fourteen was making her way slowly toward the summit. Outlined against the gray skies above them, stood the white tomb of Saint Agatha.

Even as a little child, Lucy had loved Agatha's story, and had prayed that she too might one day die for Jesus' sake. Now for long years her mother had been ill, and doctors had been unable to cure her.

Lucy had thought of the girl saint. Would not Jesus listen to her prayer, since she had died for Him? With new hope in their hearts, the girl and her mo-

ther had set out for Saint Agatha's tomb, there to plead for health.

The mother's face was lined with pain, yet she smiled when the girl turned to her with a word of love or merry little jest. "It is not far now, my mother," Lucy cried; "see, there it lies above us, half buried in the snow." The child's eyes, gentle and meek as those of a dove, were lifted in confidence to the shaft of gray stone gleaming through the bare trees, and her courage inspired the poor mother to a last strong effort. Following her daughter's gaze, she looked up the steep ascent, trying to forget the rugged, toilsome way, in the hope that the little tomb seemed to promise. A few moments, and perhaps the pain of a lifetime would be forgotten.

"I see it, child," she answered; "with God's help we will reach it before nightfall."

With fresh courage they pressed on,

and weary, but full of joy, reached the little tomb.

The snow fell more softly now, and the wind had died away. A strange peace seemed to hover over the white-robed earth. Near to the tomb was a tumbled hut, and within its poor walls the mother and daughter sought a little rest. As Lucy slept, her head pillowed against the rough boards, in a dream she saw Saint Agatha. The martyr's robe was shining like the starlight, and her arms were outstretched in joyous welcome. "Lucy, my sister," she whispered, "your mother will be cured."

Even in her sleep Lucy felt the happiness that surged through her soul at that glad message, but her heart almost ceased beating as Agatha stooped and gathered her in her arms. A wave of longing to be with God swept over her,—a stronger, purer love for Him than she had ever felt before.

"Little sister," Agatha said, and her voice was triumphant with gladness, "Jesus has heard your prayer. The crown of martyrdom shall be yours."

"Thank God, thank God," Lucy sobbed, and with that sweet cry on her lips, awoke to find her mother standing before her in the morning sunlight, cured of her infirmity.

The days that followed were joyous ones for Lucy. All that she had she gave to the poor, and over and over again promised the dear Lord to live for Him alone until she might lay her life in sacrifice at His feet.

The time was not far distant. A persecution of the Christians was even then raging, and soon Lucy was brought to the prefect. She was condemned to be burned alive, but when she was cast into the flames God saved her from the heat. Then it was ordered that her heart should be pierced with a sword. And so, on the

thirteenth of December, soon after the vision at the tomb of Agatha, her soul sped forth to God.

Feast, December thirteenth.

Maximian, The Sleeper

DECIUS, the pagan Emperor, was holding court in pomp and power. Out of hatred for the Christians, he had decreed that all who loved the dear Lord Whom we adore should die.

It was in the year 250 in the city of Ephesus.

The persecution had but begun when seven boys were brought before the tyrant. Proudly they confessed that they were Christians. Angered by their daring, Decius ordered that they should be buried alive in a cave near the city walls.

The boys heard their sentence without a sign of fear. Maximian turned to the others with a smile on his lips. "Let us not think of it as a burial, but as a long, sweet sleep in Christ," he said.

"It is not so much a sleep as a battle in

darkness," answered Melchus. "But the King of Armies will be our strength."

Surrounded by guards, they were led to the cave. It was a weary journey, over roads that lay white and dusty under the noonday sun. To the boys it must have seemed a march of triumph, so free was their carriage and so light their step.

It was nearly sundown when the entrance to the cave was reached. First, the soldiers of Decius entered to see that no way of escape was possible. When they came out, stern men though they were, their faces were blanched at the thought of such a death. The boys stood a little apart, very quiet, but still brave and sturdy of heart.

Behind the green hills of Ephesus, the sun was sinking to rest. The fields lay bathed in the soft, rosy afterglow, and the earth in all its fairness called to the boys in a powerful appeal. They were young and strong, and life was full of promise.

Maximian raised his right hand and made the sign of the Cross. His companions started, brought to a quick realization of their danger. Ah, yes, the world was fair, but heaven was fairer still.

As with one accord, they turned away from the cool, sweet fields and bowed their heads before the dreary cave. With steps that never faltered, they passed through the low entrance as true soldiers of a crucified King. The great stone was rolled to the door and sealed. The guards went their way.

Who could tell of the weary hours before death came! Perhaps God sent His angels to awaken sweet echoes out of the still darkness; perhaps He let the boys suffer seemingly alone, for a little time, that they might win a nearer place to Him in heaven. What happened we do not know, save that at length the long, sweet sleep of Christ, of which Maximian had

so bravely spoken, touched their tired eyes.

Over two hundred years later, in the reign of Theodosius the Younger, the cave was discovered and opened, and the relics of the seven boy martyrs found there. On account of the peculiar manner of their death, their names have come down to us as "The Seven Holy Sleepers," and it is under this title that we best know them.

Feast, July twenty-seventh.

Martina, The Beautiful

MARTINA was but thirteen years old when her beauty, wealth and learning attracted many suitors. All unconscious of her charm, and in child-like wonder at their admiration, she gently refused all that they would gladly have laid at her feet. With her big blue eyes full of a love they could not understand, she would repeat softly, "I am promised to Jesus, my heart is given to Him."

At last the Emperor himself summoned her to appear before him. With the sweet simplicity of one who never thinks of self she obeyed.

To know Martina was to love her. The Emperor felt her gentle charm as had the others.

"Art thou a Christian?" he asked.

With a look of rapt love the child lifted

her head, and, as though speaking to One unseen, answered joyously, "I am."

"Ah, that is because thou hast not seen the gods that we adore," said the Emperor. "Wilt thou come with me to the temple of sacrifice and see how wondrous they are?"

Martina paused a moment, her head bent, as though she were listening to that dear One in Whose almost visible presence she stood. Then she smiled a little, and answered, "I will go with you to the temple and see your gods."

Then the Emperor placed her beside him in his own chariot, and, accompanied by a long procession of pagan priests, courtiers and slaves, they made their way to the place of sacrifice. Several Christians joined the throng, anxious for Martina's safety, and wondering at her strange journey.

They reached the temple. The Emperor escorted the little maid within,

amidst a blare of trumpets and clash of cymbals, as the hour of sacrifice was announced. Before the approach of the priests, the Emperor signaled for quiet. Then he turned to the child by his side, and said in his gentlest tones, "Martina, thou seest the god we adore; do thou kneel before it and swing the censer in adoration. Else"—he paused, and a stern ring crept into his voice—"thou shalt die."

Martina took two steps forward, and with her hands crossed on her breast and her eyes downcast knelt before the huge idol. The few Christians present held their breath in fear. Was Martina going to give up Christ? The Emperor smiled triumphantly, thinking he had won an easy victory.

Suddenly, the girl arose and made the sign of the Cross toward the pagan altar and enormous idol. There was a crash and a wild flurry of falling stone. The idol lay in pieces at her feet, but the little

maid scarcely saw it. Her eyes were uplifted to the blue skies, visible through the open roof of the temple. Her white robe gleamed whiter in the midst of the broken gray stone, and the sunlight shed about her a cloak of shimmering gold.

Furiously the Emperor demanded "Why hast thou done this thing?"

Gently the girlish voice answered, "Because Christ alone is God."

The Emperor's cry of anger was echoed by that of the pagan priests. "Martina must die. Away with her."

Forth from the gray ruins the child was dragged. She knew she was going to a death of cruelty, but there was only gladness in her pure young heart. Martyrdom meant a gateway to God, and then rest—close to His Sacred Heart.

Near the arch of Aurelius, kneeling in the dust of the roadside, Martina won her crown by the executioner's sword. As fair as a lily, and as pure, she offered her

heart and her life to God. A moment she knelt motionless before the great sword fell, with that same eager look on her face. Then, with the name of Jesus on her lips, she bowed her head for the stroke.

A moment later her snowy robe was dyed with the roses of martyrdom, and another virgin soul stood in the radiance of God's great White Throne.

Feast, January tenth.

Nomen, The Nameless One

IN the year 320, a legion of Roman soldiers was quartered in the little town of Sebaste in Armenia, waiting orders from the Emperor. The barracks stood at the northern end of the town, and at the gate had been erected an idol, before which the soldiers were commanded to burn incense daily. In the legion were forty young Christians, who steadily refused to obey the imperial order.

Word of their disobedience was sent to the Emperor. He commanded that all who refused to sacrifice should die.

A day was appointed for the test, and at the word of the centurion the men formed in a hollow square about the idol. The Emperor's decree was read, and the soldiers of the legion were com-

manded to step forward and swing the golden censer before the god of the realm.

One by one the pagan soldiers bowed in homage. Then there was a pause. The first of the Christian soldiers heard his name called, and stepped from the ranks.

His answer was quiet but firm, "I cannot offer sacrifice to an idol made by man."

He was instantly condemned to death, and with him thirty-nine others, who, Christians like himself, refused the adoration asked of them.

It was midwinter. Hoping that slow torture might weaken their courage, the Christians were exposed to the icy wind on a frozen pond. The sun sank behind the hills, and the bitter blasts swept coldly over the waters. In places the ice broke under the weight of the martyrs' bodies, and they sank knee and waist deep into the pond.

One of them, a mere boy, Nomen, cried out to the others, "Courage, comrades! Forty we have come to combat, and forty we must be crowned."

"O God, be our strength," the others made answer.

The stars glittered coldly, high above them, and silence fell, broken only by the footsteps of the guard. The quiet became so deep that half unconsciously he stood at rest, so as not to intrude the echo of his footsteps on that sacred hush.

An instant later, he saw, afar off in the midnight skies, a silver trail. Brighter it grew, and before his astonished gaze there swept a long, fair line of angels, each bearing a crown. Awe-stricken, the pagan soldier fell to his knees. As he gained courage to look again, he saw that one angel bore no crown, and in a moment he knew the reason.

A cry rang out from the icy waters, "I give up Christ, I cannot bear the pain."

A soldier was drawn from the pond and carried to a warm bath. But life was too nearly gone, and he died in his sin.

Watching in silence, his heart softened by the vision of the angels, and flooded by grace from the great King, the guard flung off his cloak and plunged into the stream. "I too wish to be a Christian," he cried. "I give my life for Christ's sake."

A low murmur of joy surged from the freezing lips of the martyrs. "Our number is complete," Nomen whispered.

Morning broke at last, and found all dead, save Nomen, who, younger and stronger than his comrades, had longer endured the bitter cold.

When the officers came to carry away the dead they felt his heart still beating. They would have attempted to restore him to life, in the hope that he might now offer sacrifice, but among the women who stood near was the mother of the boy. Knowing their intention and fear-

ing lest her son be yet separated from the glorious band, she lifted him gently in her arms, and bore him to the cart where the dead bodies were resting.

He opened his eyes and smiled on her, and a moment later the last of the forty martyrs was with the King.

The boy's real name is known only to God. So I have called him Nomen, which means but a name, any name. Perhaps God Himself will reveal his true name, one day, when we stand with the martyrs before His eternal throne.

Feast, March tenth.

Nunilo, Maid of Spain

IN the quaint old city of Castile lived two fair young sisters. From childhood, Nunilo and Aledia had striven to show their love for God by sweet charity to His poor and afflicted. They were sunny little maidens, with smiling lips, and deep, happy eyes, that seemed to reflect the love of God hidden in their hearts.

And yet their surroundings were not happy. The mother was a Christian, their father a Mohammedan, who showed his hatred for Christianity by ill-treating his daughters. In every daily trial, Nunilo and Aledia turned to Calvary, and at the foot of His Cross there found a solace for all pain.

A persecution against the Christians was brought on by the Saracens, and the

two young girls, distinguished by their piety, wealth, and high birth, were among the first to suffer.

They were led through the old streets of Castile under a strong guard, and were followed by a furious mob. The girls were not only unafraid, but even radiant, in the promise of coming martyrdom. Brought before the court, they were told that riches and favors without number would be theirs if they would but deny Christ. They steadily refused.

Robed in white, their arms closely linked, and their foreheads crowned with the fair, pale blossoms they had only that morning gathered, they made a picture that might have touched a stern heart. But angered by their firmness, the judge gave them into the hands of a wicked woman, who tried to destroy their purity of soul. Jesus loved and protected His own, and they came forth but sweeter and holier for their trial.

On the twenty-second of October, the girls were kneeling in prayer in their narrow prison cell. The day was dying, and through their one little barred window they could see the flush of late twilight fading beyond the hills. Soon they would pass over the heights of time, beyond the fading twilight, and into that fair country where "The Lamb is the Lamp thereof."

Steps sounded down the rough flagstones, and a soldier came into the cell. In his hand he bore a sword that had been made holy by the blood of many of Christ's chosen ones.

A short prayer, a last embrace, and Nunilo and Aledia bowed their heads for the stroke. Only a moment of separation, and they were united forever, their happiness blessed by God Himself.

Feast, October twenty-second.

Omnes Martyres

IT was the year 477, in the old city of Carthage. Huneric, the Vandal Emperor, had recently ascended the throne of his father, Genseric. The laws against the Christians had been severe, but in the first few years of his reign the new Emperor was lenient toward Christianity.

Up to this time, the Christians had been forced to hear Mass in poor stables or underground caves, sometimes even in a cove left dry by the outgoing tide where the hymn of the waves and the prayers of the faithful ascended in praise together. Again, the Holy Sacrifice had been offered in the home of a noble proconsul, a Christian. But whether in the cove by the sea or in the consul's marble halls, it was the same dear Lord that was present.

And now, for the first time, the Christians were free. The little caves, so often

reddened with the blood of martyrs, were abandoned, and chapels, small, but as beautiful as love could make them, were built in the midst of the city. Gladly did those who had wealth give of their abundance, and even the little children did their share in the giving. Gardens were stripped of their fairest flowers, and loving little hands decorated the white altar, where the King might now be honored openly. The golden dove, whose hollow breast held the Christ in His sacramental presence, was hung in a very garden of rosy lights, little votive lamps, whose flames seemed prayers of fiery, impetuous love.

Twelve little children, boys and girls, companions in a Christian school near one of the chapels, made the care of the altar especially their own. How their hands trembled as they approached that little hanging dove which concealed Our Lord as truly as the golden door on our altars conceals Him now!

Half in fear of coming danger, as were all in those days, even in their new liberty, the little ones were taught to be prepared, should the persecution be renewed. Each morning, when they received our Lord in Holy Communion, they asked Him for grace so to love Him, that they would be willing to suffer torture, even death, rather than deny Him. Not that they were sad or long-faced. Their love for God made them so happy, that they were the merriest at play and the brightest at home.

For three short years, there was peace, and through those years, those who were older and knew the danger of the times, prepared themselves and their loved ones for possible combat.

In the year 480 the blow fell. Christian worship was forbidden under pain of death, and back to their caves the Christians fled.

The twelve little children, lovers of our Lord, were brought to the court one day.

Wholly afraid, yet full of earnest love, they clung to each other. No strong teacher was there now, to counsel them to repeat the prayers they had learned at Jesus' Feet, but their angels did what human loved ones would have done, and whispered comfort and courage into the noble hearts.

Bravely they looked beyond the guards, beyond the damp stone walls, beyond the pale sunlight without, as though they did not see them. Before them gleamed the pearly gate which, Saint John tells us, leads to heaven, and at the gate Jesus was waiting.

To the questions of the judge their answers rang out with childlike sweetness, and no threat of torture could make them give up Christ. They were condemned to be beaten to death, not in one terrible hour of torture, but little by little, day after day, that they might grow weak in their love for God.

Far from weakening, these sturdy little ones encouraged each other as the slow days dragged by. They were only children, and it was so hard to be silent under the heavy, leaded whips, when the old bruises were opened again and the blood ran! It was harder still when the long night came, and there was no soft bed, but only the rough prison floor for their poor, torn limbs. The eldest was perhaps twelve, it may be even younger, yet not a complaint came from their lips.

One by one, the children gave their lives for Jesus, one by one they were folded in His arms, until all were before Him, not in trembling awe, as in the little chapel, but in wonderful love, close to His Sacred Heart, as were the little ones who came to Him by the lake of Galilee, in the days when He walked on earth.

Feast Day.

Pancratius, Boy Martyr

"NAY, it is too heavy for thee to lift. Shall I not share thy work for the Lord?"

The old man smiled into the boyish face. "Long hast thou shared my labor, Pancratius, and soon shalt thou share my reward."

The boy paused an instant, and grew suddenly grave. "Pray that the time may be soon, dear friend," he said. Catalus lifted a manacled hand, and pushing back the boy's damp curls, traced a cross on his forehead. "I shall pray," he said.

For some months, the brave lad, the only son of Lucina, one of the noblest matrons of Rome, had been working in the stone quarries, helping those Christians who were condemned to toil there.

Catalus was old and feeble, but he bent to his work, day after day, with courage. For was he not in the Master's vineyard, and his day of suffering nearly done? Soon the Voice of God would call him. Ah, then indeed would the "Burden of the day and its heats" be as nothing. A strange friendship had sprung up between the old man and Pancratius, and each spurred on the other to nobler work, for Christ's sake.

A few days later, and the dream of the boy's heart came true. He was to die a martyr's death. A brief confinement in the dungeons of the Mamertine, and he was condemned to be exposed to the wild beasts in the Coliseum.

The morning of the conflict broke clear and smiling, and the tiers of seats were crowded with eager spectators. The boy, erect and joyous, came forth from the gate. The guards fell back and he was alone.

There was no sign of fear, no shrinking,

"Alone in the great Coliseum, while the cages of wild beasts were being drawn up from their keeps."

in that lithe, young form. The white tunic, his martyr-robe, fell in wind-blown folds about him. His face was flushed, his lips smiling.

A grating noise from the keep of the arena told those familiar with these scenes of death that the hour had come.

Slowly the cages were drawn up, and two lions, lean from starvation, bounded to the red sands. The boy stood motionless. With a roar that thrilled every heart the great beasts made for their prey. The spectators leaned forward.

On came the lions, with red tongues hanging, thirsting for blood. They were almost at the boy's side when suddenly as though they had come upon a stone wall, they stopped short and crouched at the martyr's feet. Pancratius awoke as if from a trance, and rested one hand on the magnificent head of the nearest beast.

A cry rang out from the Emperor's

pavilion, "A fraud, a fraud,—provoke them, you coward!"

In instant obedience the boy waved his arms and tried to excite them. But they fled at his approach, in very fear. A murmur of admiration surged through the crowd. For the first time the boy felt afraid. Were they going to pardon him? He had thought heaven so near—and now was it all a dream?

Forgetting those about him, he cried out his heart's longing, "Jesus, let me die for You. You have shown Your power, now show Your mercy, and bid me come." Tears of earnestness stood in the dark eyes, and lips that had smiled at certain death trembled now.

As though in answer to that prayer the lions sprang toward him. From where they had crouched, a few feet away, the boy saw them come, and with a glad cry raised his head. A dark, lean body leaped up and folded itself about the white form.

With lips parted, as though to speak his King's dear name, the boy fell dead, crowned with the rubies of his own blood, the jewels of martyrdom.

Feast, May twelfth.

Potomiana of The Lilies

IN the slave quarters of a great Roman villa, a girl of fifteen was sitting at her mother's feet.

The little hut was wretchedly poor. The floor was of sun-baked earth, the bed a bundle of branches, with a covering of some coarse stuff. The sunlight filtered through the one window, casting a glory over the bowed head of the girl. She was beautiful with a loveliness, that seemed to lift her above her sordid surroundings. Her eyes were those of a little child, but the lips, firm and sweet, revealed a strong soul. She was pale now, and seemed troubled.

There was a wistful look in the mother's eyes, and she lifted the fair young face to her own as she questioned her of the day.

"Was the master then so angry when he learned that thou wert a Christian," she asked gently.

The girl hesitated.

"Tell me, child," the mother urged.

"I have seldom seen him so angry, mother," Potomiana whispered. "He said that a slave must obey a master, and that unless I would do his will, he would put me to death."

"And what didst thou say to him, my daughter?"

The girl raised her head proudly. "I said, My body, indeed, is yours, but my soul is long ago given to God, and will never renounce Him."

There was a moment's silence. Half reverently the mother rested her hand on her daughter's dark hair. Both knew what that brave answer would mean. Their hearts were so full that speech did not come easily.

Potomiana spoke first. "I am to go to him again tomorrow, mother dear, and should I still refuse to give up my God,"—she hesitated, then added softly,—"I will

not see thee again until we meet before God."

The mother's lips trembled, but she answered courageously, "I give my little daughter back to Jesus Christ, Who gave her first to me."

At the appointed hour, the next morning, Potomiana was again in the presence of the master. Her eyes were downcast, her cheeks white as the lilies she bore in her arms. Quietly she arranged the flowers near the long doors that led to the garden, then stood with clasped hands, her face turned from the sunlight, waiting her sentence.

"Well," the master's voice asked harshly, "What is your answer?"

"My answer was given to you yesterday, my lord," she replied, "and cannot be changed."

He looked at her with something like admiration. Silently she stood among the lilies, her soul in its purity fairer than

they. In a painless, fragrant death they were breathing out their lives, but the lily of Jesus must suffer in dying.

Only a moment the master hesitated, then the order came. "Go, worthless slave, I condemn you to be burned in a cauldron of burning pitch."

The girl bowed her head. At a signal, two soldiers led her away. Ah, that cruel, white road of martyrdom, jostled by the curious crowd, and with a death of terrible agony awaiting her at its ending! The wind bore towards her the odor of burning pitch, and she thought of it as the incense that was to accompany her life's sacrifice to God.

Brave to the end, she met her death. Dark fumes rose about her, but out of their midst, as a snow-white dove, sped the soul of the slave-maiden. Up from the clamors of earth to peace and the embrace of the King Whose little spouse she was.

Feast, June seventh.

Quiricus, The Baby Martyr

THE mother was dreaming of the future, her eyes fixed on the far-off line, where the hilltops met the summer sky. Roses climbed riotously over the white arches of the portico. To the westward, fields of golden grain swayed at the touch of the lightest breeze. The slaves were singing at their work.

At her feet nestled a baby form. Little Quiricus, weary of play, had fallen asleep, a few faded flowers grasped tight in his dimpled hand. The mother's gaze rested on his tossed curls, and she felt her eyes grow dim.

It was not for herself that she dreaded the future and its possible martyrdom; it was for the child, who was dearer to her than her heart's blood. Should she be apprehended and condemned, what would

"And Oh, the questions when day was done, and he came to lie in her arms."

happen to him? Would he forget after her death the Baby Jesus Whom he now loved so tenderly?

She lifted the face of the sleeping child to her own. Three short years had he been hers. The first words his lips had uttered were "Jesus, Mary." His innocent soul lived with those whose names he spoke so reverently. Sometimes in the midst of his play she would see the baby eyes grow large, and the little feet stay their eager dancing, as though he heard Jesus calling him. And oh, the questions, when day was done, and he lay dreamily in her arms!—questions that she answered with a softly breathed prayer, so direct and sacred were they.

Quiricus stirred, and mother-love forced to her lips the smile her baby knew. Two little hands clutched at her robe, and with a merry laugh the lad scrambled to his feet. For a moment Julitta pressed him to her heart. He wound his arms about

her neck, and the touch of his lips so close to her own dispelled her fears. If she so loved her child, how much greater was the love of God for the little soul He had created? Bravely she would face what might come, trusting her baby to that love.

Alexander, governor of Tarsus, hated the Christians. Julitta was of royal blood, too well known to escape detection, and was soon summoned to appear before him. On the 13th of June, 304, the trial took place.

Alexander took Quiricus from his mother, and tried with caressing word and voice to win the little heart. The baby's eyes roved about with wonder. He could not understand why he should be in the governor's arms, while his dear mother was tied to a post so far away. With the child's face hidden in his purple toga, the governor questioned Julitta. Finding that she remained firm, he ordered her to be

whipped. At the first sharp hiss of the leaded cords the baby's head was raised.

"Mother, mother," he cried piteously, "I love you."

With wonderful courage, the mother's cry answered his, "Love Jesus, my little son."

In his efforts to break away, Quiricus tore wildly at the purple robe.

"I do love Jesus, I love Him, I love Him," he sobbed.

The governor held the little hands. Gently as a mother he kissed the trembling lips and soothed the baby's fright. "Be still, wee one," he commanded very softly.

Over in the far court the terrible scourging went on, but now the mother was silent. Her heart was a throbbing, living prayer for her child. He was no longer by her side, but in the power of the governor, cloaked in his purple mantle, shielded in his arms.

"Guardian angel of my little one, keep white his robe of baptism—give his soul back to God as pure as it was then."

So intense was her prayer that the sharp pain was almost forgotten. The memory of her confidence that day in the garden came back to her now as a gleam of comfort. God would not forget.

Half in a dream she raised her head, and saw Quiricus struggle again to break away.

Over and over, he cried aloud, "Dear Jesus, I love You." Angered at last, the governor lifted the child in his arms and threw him down violently.

There was one cry, and a little form lay quiet at the foot of the marble steps. The child had sped ahead of his mother on the royal road of martyrdom.

Feast, June sixteenth.

Rogation, Red-Robed

DONATION entered the house with a light step. His brother looked up from the parchment he was reading, and smiled a welcome. The two were rare comrades, sharing alike joy and sorrow. With the quick intuition of love, Rogation felt, rather than saw, some difference in his brother. "Something has happened to make you glad," he said. "Tell me what it is."

Donation bowed his head. "To-day I was made a child of God," he answered. "I have only just come from the baptismal font. O, my brother, would that you too were a Christian, that as apostles we might go out together and bring others to Christ Jesus."

A shade passed over the boy's face.

"Would, indeed, that I were a Christian," he replied sadly.

Donation drew his brother closer. "Will you let me teach you of God?" he pleaded.

"Yes, yes," the boy answered.

Reverently Donation began his task, and when he had done his brother sprang to his feet. His eyes were glowing, and eager love revealed itself in every line of his boyish form.

"I believe in Jesus Christ," he cried, "and I shall follow Him."

But Baptism was still far away. It was in the midst of a time of persecution, when it was not always easy to reach the pastor of the flock, though he strove to be ever near, in disguise, to them who needed his care.

The brothers were arrested on the charge of being Christians, and brought to the courts. Donation was questioned first, then sent to prison, leaving his

brother alone. As the one he so dearly loved was dragged from the room in chains, the older boy set his lips. True, he was not yet a child of God, save in desire, but even desires were dear to the Lord.

Nobly he answered the questions of the judge, and strong in his new-found faith never faltered. A brief hour, and the brothers were reunited. The prison doors grated shut, the bars were drawn, and they were alone. Their hands were bound, their ankles chained to the rough wall. The elder brother was suddenly startled by the sound of low, broken sobs. Painfully he moved his arms and touched Rogation.

"Are you in sorrow because you have not been baptized?" he asked gently.

The boy assented.

"We will pray that your life-blood given for Jesus may be your baptism," Donation whispered comfortingly.

Darkness settled over the cell, but the sharp stones and broken clay made a weary resting place. Through the long night they clung to each other, and the first pale rays of sunlight found them ready for the summons.

United in love and faith, they went forth to die. Together they bore the rack and sword, together they won the martyr's crown.

Fear had passed from Rogation's soul. Clad in the red baptismal robe of his own blood, he lifted his soul for the inheritance of a child of God.

Feast, May twenty-fourth.

Rose of Viterbo

BEFORE the tabernacle door a little child was praying. Her hands were folded, her eager eyes uplifted in sweet confidence. Jesus was there.

The chapel was very still. The morning sunshine flooded the aisles with golden light, and the child in her white robe and fair hair seemed more of heaven than of earth. Hour after hour she would linger in the dear Lord's presence, whispering her love to Him. Jesus and Jesus' Mother filled her heart.

Along the dewy lanes at dawn, she would speed to Him, to tell Him all her secrets through the frail barrier of the little altar door. Then home again, in the dim twilight, to dream of Him, and long for the time when she would be with Him again.

When she was ten years old she received the Franciscan habit from the hands of the Blessed Mother. A little later she was given a strange work to do.

Pope Innocent IV. had been driven from Rome by what was there known as the Imperial party, under the influence of Frederick II. Loyal Catholics turned to God for help.

Rose was the answer to their prayer. "Go and preach," God's Mother said, and Rose obeyed. Young girl as she was, she took her stand in the market place of Viterbo. Clothed in the coarse brown habit of the Order of Saint Francis, with the fragrance of innocence as the breath of a lily about her, she spoke, and her counsel was wise and firm. God's will was shown through His servant, and His power and wisdom thrilled the hearts of the listeners, the more that the instrument He had chosen was so docile in His hands.

Fearing her influence, the Imperial

party drove her from the city. But in suffering, as in peace, she carried on her work.

At last her task was done, and the people won their rights, strong in the strength of God learned from the girl-champion of the Pope. The Sovereign Pontiff was brought back to Rome, and Rose returned to her little village.

In a quiet spot she made herself a cell, and there alone with God she spent many a happy hour. Kneeling on the bare earth, as so long ago, before Jesus, in the little chapel, her soul was lifted far above the tumult of the world. Peace was mirrored in her clear eyes, peace rested on her calm brow.

She was only eighteen when she died. The Church honors her with another girl saint, Rosalia, on the fourth of September.

Feast, September fourth.

Simon, Infant Martyr

IT was in the Spring of the year 1472, in the city of Trent, in a quiet nook, a band of Jews were gathered. The fields were blanketed with snowy petals, shed by the still white trees. Branches ladened with pale blossoms drooped to the very ground, veiling the brown trunks with a mantle of living beauty. A meadow brook mirrored back the vision of earth and sky—and the dark faces of the men on its bank.

It was Holy Week, and the feast of the Jewish Passover was at hand. Bitterly their minds traveled back over the past. They were an outcast people. And why? Because long ago their nation had risen up against Jesus of Nazareth, Who was God, and had crucified Him.

They did not stop to think that they

were outcast by their own fault, that the love of the Good Shepherd yearned over His lost sheep, longing to bring them back to the fold. No, their hearts were dark in sorrow and ignorance and sin. They would plan some deed of blood for the Good Friday to come. A little Christian must die.

Then one of the number left the others and wandered through the near-by lanes. The rest waited.

Soon Tobias returned leading a child. The baby held a bright coin, and had lifted happy, confident eyes to the dark man who had been so good.

That night Simon, the infant martyr, gave up to God a little soul so white, so pure, that Jesus gathered it into His Arms, sealing it with the red Blood of His Sacred Heart.

Ah, if his persecutors had but known the secret of the child's strength! Beside him his guardian angel knelt with out-

stretched, shining wings, and the baby soul was safe in his care throughout the long torture.

If God so loved His children martyrs, the little Holy Innocents, who died that He might live, how dear to Him must have been this wee soul! They are called the "Flowers of the Martyrs," and Simon by his death deserves to be known as another sweet blossom for the eternal delight of God.

Many miracles have been the sign of God's love for him. His relics are under the high altar of St. Peter's in Trent, and the Church honors him by a feast day of his own.

Feast, March twenty-fourth.

Soteris, The Patrician's Daughter

IT was toward evening, and the marble hall was flooded with rose light. Mirrors of burnished steel caught the soft color and threw little gleams of opal over the fountain in the midst of the court. Dark slaves in picturesque turbans moved swiftly about their work. The silence was unbroken save for the rippling music of the waters.

In the absence of her father, Soteris was alone with her maidens. Her room was simple, a strange contrast to the luxury of the rest of the palace, and her slaves were robed in white. By her sweetness and her learning she had converted many about her from paganism. Wherever she went she breathed a radiant love of God.

She was beautiful, with a frail, exquisite loveliness.

One of her slaves announced the coming of her father, and she went to meet him.

The glow of twilight had faded, and the great hall was lighted by bronze lamps hung from the arches. Low couches were drawn to the table for the feast. The jeweled robes of the Roman patricians gleamed with strange brightness.

Down the wide steps, surrounded by her virgins, came the Christian maiden. To her father she had never seemed so beautiful as tonight. He knew that the persecution against the Christians, under Diocletian, had just broken out, and his heart was full of fear for the child he loved. How could that slight, girlish form bear the rod or rack? And yet, descended as they were from a long line of consuls, there was grave danger, should the Christianity of this generation be discovered.

Soteris knew her peril, but to one who

walked as she did, in close union with the dear Lord, a martyr's death lost all its terror. He would be near, His Hand would uplift her in the valley of the shadow, His love shield her from harm.

All the guests of the rich Patrician loved the girl, but few knew her to be a Christian. As she presided now, with her usual grace, no one knew that it was for the last time.

A short week later she was numbered among God's martyrs. Beaten in the face until great bruises were raised, there was but joy in her heart. So had Jesus suffered in the dungeon of Caiphas.

She was condemned to be beheaded. She heard her sentence with serenity. On her forehead gleamed red drops of blood. She was crowned as her King had been crowned, and bravely she went to meet Him.

Feast, February tenth.

Tarcisius, Martyr of The Blessed Sacrament

IN the noisome dungeons of the Mamertine, the Christians were praying. The air was foul, broken potsherds were strewn on the floor, and the walls were streaked with dampness. Heavily chained and racked with pain were these chosen ones, yet a new joy brightened their eyes, hope throbbed in every heart. A messenger had been sent to the catacombs with the word of their coming martyrdom, and they were waiting for What they felt sure would be brought to be their strength in combat. He was coming Who was their God.

As they waited and prayed, a cloaked figure sought a hidden entrance to the cemetery. Off from the Appian Way, near the fountain of Egeria, a luminaria,

or air shaft, opened directly into one of the underground crypts. It was used only in times of great danger, as at the present. Through it the man let himself down. Mass was being offered, and he knelt reverently until it was ended.

Then he slipped off his cloak, revealing his soldier's armor, and advancing to the altar said something to the priest in a low voice. A little hesitation, then the priest turned to the people and told them of the Christians in the Mamertine who were to be martyred on the morrow. Would any one be brave enough to carry the Lord to them?

The little altar boy, Tarcisius, looked up eagerly. "Choose me, Father!" he begged. "Let me carry Jesus to them!"

The priest looked at him. The boy's lips were parted, and he seemed poised ready for flight as he knelt, so lightly, on the altar step.

"But you are young, child," he said

gently. "Do you realize that you will be bearing God in your arms, and that you must rather die than let Him be taken from you?"

The boy's eyes filled. "I do, my Father," he answered simply.

The priest yielded. "The task is yours, my little one," he said.

Carefully he wrapped the white Host in the finest linen, put It in a golden case, and gave It to the boy. With crossed hands Tarcisius held It close, and knelt still a moment in tremulous love. Then out into the sunlight he sped, bearing his precious Burden.

Half the journey was made, when he passed a group of pagan lads in the midst of a game.

"Ho, there, Tarcisius!" they cried. "Whither goest thou?"

The boy made no answer, but hurried on his way.

A few quick strides and he was over-

taken. "What art thou bearing?" they questioned roughly. "Open thy hands and show us."

Tarcisius shook his head. "Never," he answered courageously. They knocked him down, and tried to force his arms apart, but they clung to their Treasure. With all his soul the boy prayed that he might keep his trust. Blows rained about him, strong hands tore at the childish arms, rough kicks covered him with wounds. But Jesus was safe.

It was almost over. Consciousness was slipping, and the shouts of his tormentors sounded far away. Suddenly the blows ceased. Summoning all his slight strength, the little martyr waited,—but the end had come.

A gentle voice sounded in his ears, and strong arms lifted him from the ground. Quadratus was just in time. The boy opened his eyes, and seeing the Christian soldier, whispered, "I have Jesus with

me," and fainted. Reverently, so reverently, the soldier held the boy, on whose heart, as on a Paten of love, lay his Lord.

A few moments later the altar boy was with his King. On the shining step of the altar of heaven he knelt, and the Lord Whom he had died to save welcomed him in His glory. Not for a moment only was his reward to be—but forever! And God's angels greeted with love the martyr of the Blessed Sacrament.

Feast, August nineteenth.

Thecla, First Girl-Martyr

THE great apostle bowed his head. He had spoken with burning zeal of the glory of following Jesus Christ and being His alone, and now he was praying for the young virgin who was standing before him.

Thecla, too, was praying. At last she spoke. "I shall follow my King wheresoever He leads," she said softly, "and no home will be mine save His."

Saint Paul rejoiced and bade her watch and pray, that she might be ready when the hour of trial came. When he left Iconium it was with a strong prayer in his heart for her, that she might indeed stand firm.

Her position was difficult. Before she had known of the glory of virginity, she had been betrothed to a young man famed for his riches and generosity. Now her only hope lay in flight, away from the

anger of her parents, and the disappointment of her lover. For Jesus Christ had chosen her for His own.

In Rome she was brought before the tribunal and condemned to be the prey of wild beasts in the arena. Perhaps it was on the very day that the Church honors her, September twenty-third, that the ordeal took place. It was only a little while after the death of our Lord, and Thecla was the first girl to suffer for His love.

The first! For those who came later there would be the sweet memory of other virgin martyrs, who had gone before, and now slept with Christ. But Thecla was the first!

Alone and perhaps afraid, she stood in the great arena. Far, so far away, gleamed the blue skies. But God was not only in heaven, the world was His. And His, wholly His, was the heart of the little maid.

A dark sea of faces surrounded her, the sands of the circus were red with the blood of gladiators, and the great cages, now being lifted from their underground keeps, revealed hungry beasts. The iron bars were dropped, and the lions rushed out.

Thecla saw them come, and closed her eyes. In an instant they were upon her, —but not to do her harm. Trembling, as though struck by an invisible power, they crouched at her feet. God was near indeed to His first little martyr.

In other ways men sought her death, but God willed that she should live, and man was powerless. At last the hour came when God, having protected her so well, called her home, to bless her with the glorious title that was hers,—first virgin martyr after His own Mother, the Queen of Martyrs.

Feast, September twenty-third.

Ulpian, The Friend

"WAS it long ago?" Ulpian asked breathlessly.

"No, scarcely a month past. I knew him well, and called him friend. Now, though I know not where to find his body, he is more truly my friend than before."

"I too knew him," Ulpian broke in, "although not so nearly as you. I can picture it all. The great crowd gathered for the sacrifice, the judge Urbanus about to swing the censer, and Apian, a boy like myself, staying the act. What a glorious martyrdom was his!"

Then he paused. "But you say you know not where his body lies. Was it not buried?"

"It was thrown into the sea," his companion answered, "and a great earthquake

at the moment his body touched the water bore witness to the power of God."

There was silence, while the boys faced the stretch of water with bared heads. It was a moment for lofty thought and unspoken yearning. The day was not far off when Ulpian himself must face martyrdom, as his friend had done, and would find rest under the same waste of water. Perhaps he could foresee that day in mental vision, perhaps it was hidden from him. But from that moment martyrdom was his constant prayer.

Urbanus, the cruel judge who had put Apian to death at Cæsarea, heard of his noble friend in Tyre and sent for him. The boy's heart was full as he stood in the court room. Perhaps on this very spot Apian had listened to his sentence. "O my friend, plead for me before the Throne of Christ," he prayed silently, "that I may be strong as thou wert."

Instruments of torture hung on the

walls. The rack with its heavy ropes showed to the right of the tribunal and lictors with their bundles of fasces stood in grim strength behind the judge.

Scarcely waiting for the questions, Ulpian boldly confessed Christ. His head was lifted proudly, and his eyes with boyish love sought the glimmer of the sea, clearly visible through the grilled windows.

He was condemned to be scourged and racked. The order was carried out at once. For hours the torture endured. But life was long in going, and the calm strength and even joy of the boy-martyr was the wonder of all who beheld it.

Lying there in his own blood, with no friend near to pity, no kindly hand to soothe, the boy felt strangely at peace. His body was in exquisite pain, but to his soul the gates of Eternity were swinging ajar. Half unconscious as he was, the rumble of voices and the sharp hiss of

the whips was as the sound of a mighty wind bearing him nearer his goal.

Perhaps he was still living when they cast him into the sea, for life dies hard in the young. Down into the waves he sank, as a weary child into its mother's arms. Faithful to the end, giving up his life at the age when life is at its fairest, worthy indeed was he of the honor of a martyr's crown.

Feast, April third.

Venantius, Knight of The Cross

DARK smoke fumes hung like a pall over the courtyard. On an elevated platform, apart from the terrible scene, sat the judge who had given the sentence, and his secretary, noting, as was the custom, the effect of torture on the victim. The fire had been deadened that death might come from suffocation, but by an occasional spurt of flame, the figure of a mere lad could be seen in the thick of the smoke. The ropes that bound him seemed to have been burned away, for his arms were free.

The secretary watched keenly, waiting for the sudden fall that must come. Then he started violently. A white-robed form appeared beside the boy, treading out the smoldering embers, scattering the smoke. The majestic look of the angel and the

lad's uplifted expression of confidence awed the man. He threw aside his quill.

"The God of Venantius alone is true God!" he cried.

The boy stood free and unharmed in the midst of the court, with but the clinging odor of smoke about him, to bear witness to the ordeal through which he had passed.

The judge himself was touched. Dismissing his secretary, he ordered the boy to be sent to the governor. There, once again firm in faith, Venantius was condemned to be cast into a furnace. And as before his angel delivered him.

The tyrant then commanded a picked band of soldiers to drag the boy through a mesh of brambles and thorns.

As the order was being carried out, the soldiers complained loudly of thirst. Venantius knelt on a rock and signed it with a cross. The soldiers watched in wonder as they saw a clear stream of

water bubble from the cross he had traced. In astonishment, the echo of that tribute given in the courtyard rang out again here on the old road, "The God of Venantius alone is true God!" A boyish soldier of Christ had planted the standard of His King in the hearts of those who had followed but a ruler of earth.

Eagerly they drank of the water. Then they loosened the ropes that bound the boy, and gathered at his feet. Simply, Venantius taught them of the dear King we know and love. And the rough men, won by his gentleness, listened as little children,—and believed.

A report of the miracle was brought to the governor. Instantly he ordered the boy and his soldier-converts to be beheaded.

A little off the roadside, beyond the limits of Camerino, the executioners led the martyrs. Venantius, barely fifteen years old at the time, knelt down by the

milestone appointed, his burly soldiers by his side.

There was a moment of silent prayer, —and the end came. A boyish knight of the cross had brought his captives, chained by grace, to the Feet of his heavenly King.

Feast, May eighteenth.

Victoria, Brave-Heart

IT was in the city of Rome, in the reign of the Emperor Decius. Terrible tales of his cruelties to the Christians had spread over the country. In Antioch, Alexandria, and even in Persia many had suffered martyrdom, and now Rome was to win her crown. The edict read, "Whosoever confesses himself a Christian shall be tormented until he renounce his faith."

Before this the law had been, "Death to the Christians." Now the Emperor thought by slow torture to weaken his victims. The martyr's palm was to be won not by one swift blow of the sword, but only after days and nights of prolonged agony.

It was in this persecution that the boy martyr Dioscorus so bravely confessed his faith, and that the seven boys of Ephesus

were buried alive rather than deny their God.

Victoria knew their stories. The guards who had witnessed their heroism had repeated the tale again and again, and the Christians prayed that God might grant them the same courage when their hour should come. The girl had promised our Lord, as had Agnes, to live for Him alone.

Eugenius pleaded for her hand in marriage, but she told him, as she had told the others, that her heart was given to God. His anger frightened her, but did not change her will. The memory of those who had gone forth to die as brides of Christ was as a gleam of starlight in darkness. They were with God and were pleading for her now.

The man stood silent a moment after the refusal, half unconsciously watching the expression on Victoria's face. There was fear there, but to the tumult fear had made, Jesus spoke, and "Peace, be still,"

rang over her troubled soul. He could not understand the sudden calm or the more than earthly beauty that radiated from her presence. She whispered as she waited for the hour so soon to come, "My heart is ready, O Lord, my heart is ready."

She was called before the judge, and ordered to offer sacrifice to the gods. As she looked at the high throne and the altar of sacrifice, where Jupiter was adored, she felt an ecstatic thrill of joy. It was not an idol of stone she knew as God! And it was with a smile that she turned away with the old brave cry of the Christians, "I will never bow to Jupiter!"

She was condemned to be pierced through the heart. As she knelt to meet the thrust, there came the thought, "So did it happen to my Lord on the Cross!" And the little virgin of Christ shed her heart's life-blood for Him Who had first shed His Blood for her.

Feast, May sixth.

William of The Shops

THE boy paused at the open door. The noise and confusion of the shop rang in his ears, the streets were thronged with people, hurried and anxious faced. He lifted his eyes to the quiet skies,—there at least was peace! And he smiled as he thought how near heaven was, and how little even poor, poor people need worry over their daily needs, since God was ever watching.

He was old beyond his years, this boy of twelve. He thought of many things that did not enter into the minds of other boys. His parents were simple country folk, living in Norwich. William was an apprentice in a tanner's shop.

Though his pause was but for a moment, the smile still lingered on his lips as he turned back to the close little

stock room. It was heavy work, and ill-suited to one so young, but the lad was strong, and worked gladly.

He had seemed one of God's own from the very beginning. Before his birth his mother knew from a vision that the child whom the Lord would send would be a saint,—and he had fulfilled her dreams. Often at night she would steal up to his little room under the eaves, and watch him at prayer. Sometimes the misty moonlight would play about his head as a silver aureole. Then the mother, sinking on her knees in the dark hall, would pray that her boy might ever keep his fair purity of soul.

One day, just before Easter, 1137, the lad was captured by a band of Jews and crucified, out of hatred for Christ. The boy's simple, happy faith and holiness of life had fitted him to be their victim.

He was conscious as he was thrown on the rough cross, conscious as the nails

were driven through his hands. What wonderful love and courage!

Perhaps the knowledge of this sweet sacrifice brought some gleam of comfort to our dear Lord as He hung on His cross. Here at least was love for love.

Five years passed before his body was discovered, then it was buried with honor in the cathedral churchyard. That God's love for His martyr might be shown, many were the miracles that were worked over the small grave. The sick were healed, and virtue went out from the precious relics through the power of the divine Physician. One midwinter a rose bush burst into leaf and blossom at the foot of the little mound, and as fragrant as those winter flowers is the lad's memory to the faithful people of Norwich.

Feast, March twenty-fourth.

Winefrede of Holy Well

THE voice of Beuno, the saintly abbot, rang with power over the gathered throng. The fame of the monastery of Holy Well had attracted them, and they had come in crowds to pray at the shrine, hoping that God would more willingly listen to them there. But as they listened to the words that fell from the old man's lips, their own desires—every other thought save God's will, was for the moment forgotten.

At the foot of the pulpit, half hidden in its shadow, knelt a beautiful child. Every one knew and loved Winefrede, and almost reverenced her as the niece of the noble abbot.

Her parents were of royal birth, but of simple holiness. They had trained their

"Near the altar knelt Winefrede, as knelt the children of long ago, about the first little altar of St. Peter."

daughter to seek first the kingdom of God. Her First Communion day had just passed, and from the moment that God had made His home in her heart the child had seemed to live as one apart. Her very presence was like a gleam of sunshine. Her merry laugh and gleeful play, her sweet sympathy and childlike seriousness, won all hearts. The flowers, the snow-clad hills, the driving rain, all spoke to her of God. They were as His voice, bidding her lift up her thoughts to Him.

One day God called her to follow Him yet more closely. As clearly as though He were standing before her, she heard the old, sweet plea, "If thou wilt be perfect, come and follow Me."

And in answer, her whole heart went out to Him with the cry, "Behold, Lord, I come." What joy on earth could ever compare with that of being called by Christ! What happiness could be sweeter

than the cross laid on one's shoulder by His dear hand!

Caradoc, son of Prince Alen of Wales, begged her hand in marriage, but his every appeal met with a firm yet gentle refusal.

As a religious, she served God as joyously and as simply as she had done when a child, yet with a clearer and deeper insight as she advanced in years.

After her death the monastery of Holy Well held precious memories for those who had known and loved her. They who came there to pray felt that in heaven she was still a friend, and as a friend, they sought her intercession. This many still do, with unfailing confidence that she will obtain for them what she herself won, the vision of Christ.

Feast, November third.

A Little Follower of Xavier.

IT was soon after the death of Saint Francis Xavier, the great apostle who had labored for the conversion of Japan. Through the village streets he had passed, ringing a bell, and gathering the children about him. After they had learned of God he sent them to their parents as little disciples. The awakened faith of the people grew strong, and their love grew stronger still. When, forty years after Saint Francis Xavier's death, a persecution broke out against the Christians, these converts formed a martyrs' band, that by union in prayer they might gain strength for what lay before them. Even children joined this band, and in the hour of danger proved their courage.

Peter, a little Christian of scarcely six years old, was aroused early one morning by his father, and told that in a few hours

he was to be martyred. Only six years old! He understood what the summons meant. Smiling into his father's eyes, he caught up a gay robe and threw it over his shoulders.

"Father," he said, "I am going to Jesus this very day."

Still smiling, he placed his hand confidingly in that of the soldier who was appointed to lead him to the place of death. On the way he prattled of God, and gravely wondered that the big soldier did not know what he meant. Every one must know God!

When they reached the great hill the boy felt the hot tears come. His father's body lay on the sun-scorched grass; he had gone to Jesus first. Peter knelt down and prayed while brushing away the tears. Then he lifted his head. "Where my father has gone I must go," he said. "Please send me to God."

The soldier turned away with a sob,

and threw his sabre down. "I cannot," he muttered.

Peter drew his bright cloak about him and loosened the scarf at his throat. "I am ready," he reminded gently. "Father has already gone."

Blinded with tears, the soldier stumbled down the hill, more than half convinced that the God Who could so inspire little children, must be the true God.

Silently the boy knelt by the mutilated corpse. At last a brutal slave, picking up the sword that the soldier had thrown away, gave the death stroke. But his hand was unskilled and fell many times on the unresisting little form before death came. Not a moan escaped the child. With lips tightly pressed, he lay still under the terrible pain.

At last it was over. A worthy little follower of the great Xavier had won his martyr's crown.

Feast (Martyrs of Japan), February fifth.

Yvo, The Student

THE boy knelt for his mother's blessing. As she raised him up, she pressed him to her heart and said gently, "My son, in your new work so live that you may be a Saint."

The words made a deep impression on Yvo's mind, and many times after he had left her they came back to him filled with new meaning. A boy of brilliant intellect, he was sent at fourteen to school in Paris, and later to Orleans, where he continued his studies. Every one loved him for his innocence and earnestness. In the class room, as in the midst of a heated debate, there was a gentle courtesy about him, combined with a sturdy defense of truth, that won many to the cause of justice.

Alone in his room after the day, his

thoughts often reverted to his mother's words. With her face before him, and imagining her eyes fixed upon him, he would review the day. Every act was weighed as in the scales of her advice, every thought, word and motive, until, although in his humility he did not know it, he had made rapid strides in the way of holiness.

After his hours of study he visited the sick in the hospitals. Softly as an angel of light, he made his way between the beds, giving a word of cheer to some, perhaps a word of gentle warning to others, while white faces down the long ward turned to look after him or watched eagerly for his coming.

He longed to become a priest, but felt he was unworthy of so great an honor.

Secretly he made a vow of chastity, and with Christ in his heart worked and prayed with redoubled new zeal and love.

Even after his boyhood years had gone, and he had worked as few work in preparing for the great step, the thought of his unworthiness still held him back. Only in obedience to the command of his bishop did he at last become a priest. Then, with perfect trust in God, he became as well father of the poor, father of the friendless and suffering. His food was of the coarsest, only the scraps that were left after the poor had been fed at his hands.

In the Lent of 1303 he grew very weak, yet humbly said that he must suffer still more that his soul might be ready when the Master called. This Lent was truly for him the night before the resurrection. Scarcely had it passed when he went home to the Lord, Whom he had served as a saint, in boyhood and manhood.

Feast, May twenty-second.

Zita, The Serving Maid

THE night air blew damp about her, as she hastened over the dark road. Bare trees cast queer shadows before her, and the strange noises of the woods might have filled with fear the heart of many an older girl.

At a turn of the stile a light gleamed suddenly across her way, shining from the windows of a little church.

Then for a brief moment the serving maid of the rich Fatinelli forgot the long hard day that stretched before and the stern words that would be her lot. She was for a time a care-free child, held close in the arms of One Who loved her, and Whom she loved. Color came and went in her usually pale cheeks, and her eyes shone. Her shoulders straightened, as though they had thrown off a load, and

the old coarse cloak fell to the floor unheeded.

Swiftly the moments sped. Dawn broke; still she remained unconscious of the passing time. Long before this, she should have returned to bake bread. She had always been faithful until now.

The growing light flooded the church, then reality burst on Zita's mind. Her work! What should she do? She dreaded the anger of her master, the cold contempt of her fellow-servants, or their harsh blows, perhaps, still more. Her feet fairly flew over the ground that she had traveled that morning with so light a heart.

As she neared home, a delicious fragrance, as of new-made bread, greeted her. Who could have done her work? Surely it must have been her mistress, who in a spirit of compassion had pitied her.

She went into the kitchen, trembling a little, in fear lest it be a dream. No, there

were the loaves, done to a golden brown, warm to the touch, and fair to see.

With a thrill of gratitude she ran to her mistress and thanked her. "I have had nothing to do with it," the woman cried in astonishment. "You must thank one of the servants." But they too were in ignorance.

And then Zita knew. It was her angel who had done her work while she rested with Jesus. All day long her heart was singing in a very transport of love. Happiness glowed in her eyes, and abuse fell on her as lightly as summer rain.

Little by little, her position became easier. Gradually she won, by her gentleness, even those of the servants who had been harshest to her, and at last converted her master himself. It was done, not by miracles, but by persevering sweetness in the face of those petty crosses that wear away patience, as the constant dropping of water wears away a rock.

On the night of her death, a bright star above her little attic shone out with sudden beauty, as though to show men the glory of a soul that, passing through earth as a ray of light, had brought joy to all with whom it had lived.

Feast, April twenty-seventh.

Garnett, Mary Adelaide

Children of the Kingdom.

38715

DATE	ISSUED TO

38715